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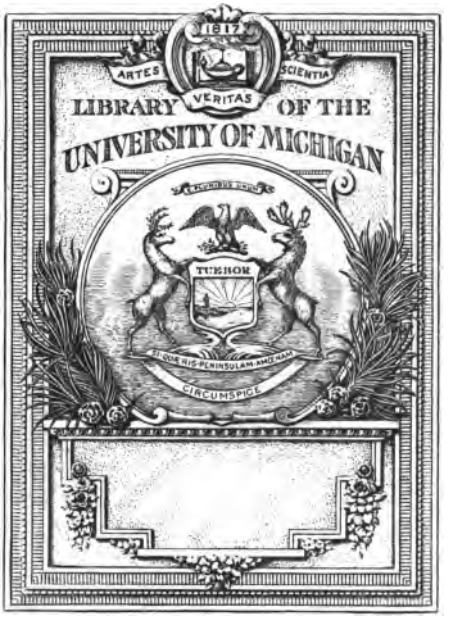

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WINTER EVENING TALES,

COLLECTED AMONG

THE COTTAGERS

IN THE

South of Scotland.

By JAMES HOGG,
AUTHOR OF "THE QUEEN'S WAKE," &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

"In rangles round afore the ingle's lowe,
Frae Gudame's mouth auld-warld Tales they hear,
O' Warlocks loupin' round the Wirrikow,
O' Ghaists that won in glen or kirk-yard drear,
Whilk touzles a' their tap, an' gars them shake wi' fear."

Fergusson.

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WINTER EVENING TALES.

THE

RENOWNED ADVENTURES

OF

BASIL LEE.*

I HAVE for these twenty years been convinced of the truth of the proverb, that a fool can best teach a wise man wit; and that it is, in fact, on the egregious misconduct of the thoughtless and foolish part of mankind that the wise and prudent calculate for their success, and from these that they take their lessons of perseverance and good management. On this principle the following sheets are indited; and that others may be warned from the rock on which I have split, I shall conceal nothing, but relate uniformly the simple truth, though manifestly to my disadvantage.—I have not

* The original of this extraordinary Journal was lodged in my hands, in the summer of 1810, by an old man, having the appearance of a decayed gentleman. It was when I commenced publishing THE SPY, that it was given in to me, for the purpose of being revised and published in that paper. A small portion of it was published; but, owing to the freedom with which the writer expressed himself, it gave offence, and was therefore cut short and discontinued. The writer, it is probable, had been offended at this, for I never saw him again; but I have since been informed, that his name is Basil Lee, and that he was alive in 1817. He never, in all these memoirs, Mentions his family name, and it is evident that he wishes to conceal it. His friends will therefore excuse me for having subjoined it, for the sake of giving interest to the narrative; and if he is still in life, I shall be glad to hear from him. The large portion that I have been obliged to cancel, it was surely better not to appear.

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written my life as a model to be copied, but as one to be avoided, and may those who laugh at my inconsistencies learn from them to steer a different course.

There is one great evil under the sun, from which, if youth is not warned, their success in life will be frustrated, and their old age be without comfort and without respect. From it my misfortunes are all to be traced, and from it I am suffering at this day. I look back on the days that are past, and am grieved. I can now see all my incongruities, and wonder at my negligence in not being able to correct them.

The evil that I complain of, by which all my views in life have been frustrated, and by which thousands as well as myself have suffered, without attributing their disappointments to it, is neither more nor less than *instability of mind*—that youthful impatience, so notorious in every young and aspiring breast, which impels the possessor to fly from one study to another, and from one calling to another, without the chance of succeeding in any. This propensity to change, so inherent in young and volatile minds, I have often seen encouraged by parents, who would as frequently apply the sage remark, that "when one trade failed, they could, when they pleased, take up another." It is the worst principle on which any man can act, and I will prove it to all the world, first from reason, and afterwards from experience.

The mind of man, survey it from what point of view you please, bears a strong resemblance to a stream of water. I hate similes in general, but the fitness of this pleases me so much at first sight, that I must follow it out. The river, when it first issues from its parent spring, is a trifling insignificant rill, and easily dammed, or turned aside either to the right hand or the left; but still as it advances, it gathers strength and power, and, unless by means the most elaborate, becomes irresistible. When it approaches the latter end of its course it becomes steady and still, and at last moves heavily

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and laggingly along, till it mixes with the boundless ocean. The stream is human life, and the ocean is eternity; but the similarity betwixt these is so apparent, that the most simple can be at no loss to trace it.

If this stream, in any part of its course, is divided into two, each of these come far short of having half the strength and force of the original current; and if parted again, they still lose in endless gradation. The consequence of this is, that the oftener a stream is divided, it becomes the more easily subdivided again and again. A shoal, or any trivial impediment, that never could once have withstood its accumulated force, stops its diminished currents, and turns them whithersoever chance may direct—a smaller obstacle does it the next time, until the noble river ends in becoming a stagnant lake, or a cumberer of the adjacent grounds. So will it prove with man, if the energies of his soul are enfeebled by a variety of unconnected pursuits.

Again, let it be noted, that it is of little moment into what channel you turn this stream at first, provided you can confine it to that channel alone; for it will continue to deepen, and bank itself in by degrees, until that channel appear to the eyes of all the world as its natural course. So it is with the human mind, even in a more extensive degree; for if its course is bent towards *any one* object, it is ten to one that it obtains it. I hope this plausible theory is perfectly understood, for it is a pity it should be lost; but I think he must have a very thick head who does not comprehend it. And now, having finished the reasoning and reasonable part of my work, I will next prove my theory by a history of my life, down to the day that I finish the last page of this manuscript.

I was third son to a respectable farmer in the upper parts of Berwickshire, who occupied an extensive tract of land, partly arable and partly pasture. At the parish school I received such an education as was generally bestowed on the

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sons of farmers in those days. I could read the Shorter Catechism, and even the Bible with great fluency, though with a broad and uncouth pronunciation. I could write a fair and legible hand, and cast up accounts tolerably well, having gone through Cocker's Arithmetic as far as the Rule of Three; but when I came into Vulgar Fractions, the trick of dividing a single number into so many minute parts quite disgusted me. I judged that thereby I was confusing myself with a multiplicity of figures, of which there was no end; so I gave it up.

At fourteen years of age, I was, by my own choice, bound apprentice to a joiner in the neighbourhood, with whom I was obliged to serve out my time, much against my will; for I deemed myself master of the craft, and much superior to my teacher, before half my time was expired. After I had struggled through it I went home. My father hinted to me, that I ought to take the wages my late master offered me to continue with him, until something better should be found. But this I slighted with high disdain; declaring that I would go to London or America, before I accepted less than double the sum proposed; and that, at any rate, was I never to learn any thing better than making a plough, or a cart-wheel?

No master could be found who would come up to my conditions, while the ease and indulgence that I experienced about my father's house, made me heartily wish that no one might ever be found; and this sentiment made me contrive some strong and unanswerable objections to every proposal of the kind, until the prospect of getting me advantageously engaged as a journeyman died somewhat away That it might not too abruptly be renewed, I proposed to my father to hold one of his ploughs, a task, to which I assured him, I was completely adequate, and gave him some wise hints of keeping forward the work of the farm, by the influence which my presence would have upon the servants. My father, who was a good-natured worthy man, acquiesced, and I fell to work;

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and certainly, for some weeks, wrought with unusual vigilance. I had one principal motive for staying at home, which my father did not advert to; I was in love with Jessy, one of the servant-maids, a little blooming arrogant gypsy, out of whose sight I could not be happy. I quarrelled with her daily, and agreed with her again, begging her pardon before night. I looked, simpered, and sighed; but all these delightful signals of love she received with seeming disdain. I was jealous of her beyond all bounds; and if I saw her smile upon any other young man, or talking apart with one, my bosom burnt with rage and revenge. I haunted her as if I had been her shadow; and though I did not know of any thing that I wanted with her, yet I neither could be happy out of her presence, nor contented when in it.

Though I believe my performance as a ploughman was of a very inferior species, I remember, I soon became superciliously vain of it, which provoked my neighbour ploughmen to treat me with very little deference. I was not slack in telling them, that it arose all from envy, at seeing themselves so much outdone by me, in a business which they had practised all their lives, but had never understood. There was no standing of this from a novice, for the border hinds are an independent and high-spirited race of men, and matters went on any way but cordially between us. My partial father came over to my side, which made the breach still the wider; and at length they told him to my face, that they would no longer work along with me; for, besides not keeping up my part, and leaving them all the drudgery, I took it upon me to direct them, while, at the same time, I knew no more of farm-labour than a cat.

I said it was impossible for me to work any longer with such boors; that I wrought nearly as much as them all put together; but that they wanted to be idle, and wished not for any such pattern. "Poor shilly shally shurf!" exclaimed one of

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them, in great indignation, "You haud a pleugh! ye maun eat a bowe o' meal an' lick a peck o' ashes first! deil hae't e'er I saw ye gude for yet, but rinnin' snipiltin' after the bits o' wenches." Knowing who was present, I threw off my coat in order to give the scoundrel a threshing; but my father ordered him to hold his peace and go about his business; and taking hold of me, he led me *by force* into the house, and there was no more of the matter.

Thus was I taken from the plough tail, and sent to herd one of the parcels of sheep, the one that contained the smallest number, and required the least attendance of any on the farm. I entered upon this celebrated classical employment with raptures of delight. Never had a mortal such a charming prospect of true felicity! I rejoiced in the opportunity that it would afford me of reading so many delightful books, learning so many fine songs and tunes, of which I was passionately fond, and above all, of kissing Jessy below the plaid. Every thing in the shepherd's life was bewitching, but this crowned them all. And that I might not want plenty of opportunities, I was resolved to be so careful, that I could not possibly get home to above one meal in the twenty-four hours, and of course, as she was house-maid, she would be obliged to carry all my meat to me.

Such was the delicious picture I had sketched out to myself of the enjoyments of the pastoral life. But, alas! every pleasure in this imperfect state of things has its concomitant evil attending it; and the shepherd's life did not at all come up to my expectations. I put all the above refined experiments in practice; I read a number of curious books,—sung songs to the rocks and echoes,—blew on the german-flute so violently, that my heart palpitated with exertion,—and, for once or twice, kissed Jessy below the plaid. But it seems this had been a freedom of which the little minx did not approve; for, thenceforward, a ragamuffin of a boy was sent with my meat, which so alter-

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ed the shepherd's views, that the nature of his flock was changed with them, and he got home for his victuals as well as any other shepherd in the country.

Moreover, by indulging in all these luxuries of fancy and imagination, these dreams of love and soft delight, I neglected my sheep; who, injudiciously, scattered themselves over a great extent of country, and got mixed among other flocks, from which I had no means of separating them. They were soon involved in inextricable confusion, while, at the same time, I was driven quite desperate; and, though not naturally of a bad temper, I often lost myself so far as to get quite enraged at the innocent creatures, and used them very ill, because forsooth they went wrong, which it was my business to have prevented, and for which, certainly, they were blameless. However, I wanted to be revenged on them.

There was another thing that mortified me a great deal; I found that much depended on my dog, and that all my exertions, without his assistance, availed not a straw in keeping my flock right. I was in fact much more dependant on him than he was upon me, and of that circumstance the haughty brute appeared to be fully aware. He was a very sagacious animal, but as proud as Lucifer, and would not take an ill word off my hand. Whenever he was in the least degree irritated, or affronted, he never chose to understand what I wished him to do; and if he did ought at all, it was the contrary of what I wanted. I knew this to be mere affectation on his part, and done to answer some selfish end, or for the still worse motive of provoking his master; so I cursed and swore, and threw stones at him, which he took good care should never hit him; and out of the reach of all other offensive weapons he prudently kept, whenever he saw me in bad humour. In return for this treatment, he took his tail between his legs, and trotted his way home, without once deigning to look over his shoulder, either to listen to my flattering promises of kindness

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and good bits, or my most violent threatenings of retaliation. There was I left by the provoking rascal, almost duly every day, as helpless a creature as could be conceived. I shouted, halloo'd, and threw my hat at the lambs, till I often could shout and run no longer; yet all my efforts could never prevent them from straying off at one corner or another. I soon found, that the nature of the colley is quite the opposite of that of a pointer or spaniel, and to be well served by him you must treat him as a friend; he will do nothing by force, but from kindness and affection he will do any thing. I was compelled to treat mine with proper deference and respect, and, when I did so, I never had cause to rue it.

There was another evil that attended me; I was obliged to rise much too early in the morning. This did not suit my habits at all, and far less my inclination, for I felt that I was not half satisfied with sleep. The consequence of this was, that, whenever I lay down to rest myself during the day, I sunk into the most profound slumbers imaginable, often not awaking for three or four hours, when I generally found all my flock in utter confusion. I had not the skill to gather and separate them, like a shepherd accustomed to the business; and these long sleeps in the fields embittered almost every day of my life. Neither did I relish the wet clothes, that I was obliged to bear about on my body from morning until night, in rainy weather; it was highly uncomfortable, and a dark mist was the devil and all! I wondered how any man could keep his flocks together in a mist, or know where they were; for there were some days that, from beginning to end, I never knew where I was myself. Then there was the vile custom of smearing them with tar all over the bodies; how I did hate that intolerable operation! Next, I was exposed to cold, to snow and rain, and all manner of hardships. In short, before the first half year had expired, I had fairly come to the conclusion, that the life of a shepherd, instead of being the most delight-

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ful and romantic, was the most dull and wretched state of existence; and I longed for a fair pretence to throw up my charge, and the plaid and crook, for ever.

That pretence was not long wanting. Out of deference to my father, the neighbouring shepherds had patiently borne with my inexperience and neglect, and had often brought my scattered flocks back to me, in hopes that after a little experience I would grow better. But seeing that I grew still the more negligent, they combined in a body, and came to my father; and, making an old man named Willie Beatie their spokesman, they represented me in such a light, for a lazy, insignificant being, as I never shall forget; and there was something which the old crabbed body said that day, that I found afterwards to be too true. "Ye'll get nae luck o' that callant, Sir," said he, "gin he dinna haud his neb better to the grunstane. I wat weel, I hae naething to say ferrar nor what concerns the sheep; but, I trow, gin ye dinna tie him til a job that he canna get quat o', he'll flee frae ae falderall till anither a' the days o' his life; he'll be a plague amang the women too; an' a' thegither ye'll mak but little mence o' him."

My father did not much relish this piece of information, and that he gave the old man to know; but Crusty was not to be snubbed in that way, for his observations grew still more and more severe on my character. "Ey troth, gudeman, ye may just tak it as weel, or as ill as ye like, I carena the black afore my nail about it; a' that I said I'll stand to; I hae naething to do wi' nae honest man's bairn, only I ken this, gin I had sic a chap for a son, I wad either bind him to a sea captain, or gie him a penny in his pouch, an' strap him aff to the Indians—he'll get plenty o' women there as black as slaes; an' that will be better than to hae him rinnin' jinking after fouk's wives an' dochters here, an' bringin' disgrace baith to you an' ither fouk—gin *he* dinna' soon come afore the kirk, I hae tint my skill. But I hae nought to say to that—only, gin ye had to

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gather his sheep for him, as often as I hae done for this half year bygane, ye wadna be pleased at him mair nor me. When I see a young chap lying slubberin' an' sleepin' a' the day in a heather bush, I can guess what he has been about a' the night."

I never in my life would so gladly have been quit of any body as this old termagant, for I was afraid every moment that he would come out with something which, if my parents knew, would ruin me. My favourite Jessy had been lately married, which I did not much strive to prevent, having laid a plan with myself of seducing her affections afterwards. No sooner was the ceremony over, than I set about my laudable scheme, with all manner of despatch; but the little devil thought proper to inform her husband, and, not being aware of this, on my return to see her, I had nearly paid very dear for my temerity. My character being now entirely at their mercy, I was in horrors lest they should expose me; and I feared that this old inveterate rascal had already got hold of the story, and was coming out with it. However, I did not hear any more of it, and have taken good care ever since, how I paid my addresses to other men's wives. It may be a very pleasant thing to gain their affections; but when they tell, and put all out together, it comes to be rather disagreeable.

In the appeal made by the shepherds, my father was obliged to acquiesce, and another lad was hired to my flock. It proved a great relief to me, and I now remained idle about my father's house. I played incessantly on the fiddle, to the great annoyance of the family, and soon became a considerable adept. Certainly my strains were not the sweetest in the world, for I paid no regard to sharps or flats; but I had a good bow-hand and held on with vigour, taking care never to stick a tune because I went wrong in it. I soon attained a high character as a musician, and heard some very flattering encomiums on my skill from country neighbours, who even went so far as to aver

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that "I needed not to be afraid to gang through a tune wi' auld Neil Gow himsel."

I soon observed that my parents were growing uneasy on my account, and dissatisfied that I should be thus trifling away the best of my time: I was terrified for the axe and long saw again, and began to cast about for some creditable business to which I might betake myself; for, now that I had lost Jessy, and all the delights I promised myself in her company, I had nothing of that nature to bind me at home. At length, it was decided that I should set up as a grocer in the town of Kelso, which quite delighted me; and at the next term I began business.

My father's circumstances being well known, I had plenty of credit; neither was I slack in accommodating others in the same way, so that my customers multiplied exceedingly. My luxuries melted from my shop like the snow from the mountains, and new cargoes poured in like the northern blasts that supply these; but, in spite of my inclinations, and a natural aversion that I had to spirits of every description, I soon began to get dissipated. I was fond of music and song, which often gathered idle people about me, whose company, though I wished to decline, yet I could not resist; and by degrees I was led on till I took my glass as freely as any of them; so that, oftentimes, when I came into the shop at night to wind up my affairs for the day, and to balance my books, I was so drunk that I knew not one thing from another.

I committed a number of small mistakes in these degrees of elevation, which had nearly cost me a deal of trouble. I had once nearly lost a family of good customers, by selling them a quarter of a pound of cut-tobacco instead of tea, which did not agree with them. I likewise furnished an honest man with a quantity of snuff, instead of Jesuit barks. He drank it for the removal of some impediment about the stomach; but it had quite a different effect from that de-

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sired. To give people a dose of saltpetre instead of glauber salts was a frequent mistake with me, as I never could know the one from the other; and I had twice to give damages on that score. But the thing that frighted me worst of all was the giving a glass of vitriol to a Highlander, over the counter, instead of whisky. He drank it off, and went away without any remark, save that "she was te cood;" but, when he left the shop, I observed that his lips were primmed close together, and the tears were streaming over his cheeks. On examining the bottle I discovered my mistake, and had no doubt that the man would die instantly. I learned that he was driving Highland cattle, and was seen with them about a mile beyond the town; but I thought he could not live, and expected every day to be apprehended for poisoning him. Day came after day, and no word arrived of the dead Highland drover; till, at length, about a month after, I was thunderstruck at seeing the same old man enter the shop, and again ask me to sell him "a glassfu' of te whisky." I could not believe my eyes; but he removed all my doubts, by adding, "an it pe your vill, let her have te same tat she got fan she vas here pefore." I said, I feared I had none of that now, but that some alleged it was not quite the thing. "Hech, man, she shoorly vas te cood!" replied he, "for hit no pe little tat mak auld Tonald pegh (pant), an py cot she vas mhait and trink to hersel for two wheeks."

What a tremendous stomach the old fellow must have had! but I was so overjoyed at seeing him again, that I gave him two or three glasses of the best spirits I had, for which I refused to take any payment. He took off his bonnet, bowed his grey-matted head, and thanked me; promising, at the same time, "always to pe my chustomer fan he came tat vay."

I continued in business only twenty months, and, by the assistance of a steady old man, had kept my books perfectly regular; but at this time I committed a great blunder, by suf-

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fering a bill granted by me to a rival house to be protested, and still to lie over, on account of some temporary disappointment. Such a neglect is ruin to a man in business. He had better make any sacrifice. This, I know, that it knocked my business on the head, which, with a little more attention, could not have failed of doing well. My credit was ruined, and every debt that I owed was demanded up at once. Though I had stock, I had neither command of money nor securities; and being void of patience, and disgusted with the duns that came on me at every hour of the day, and the threats of prosecutions, I lost heart. Most unadvisedly, I locked up the doors of my shop, and gave my books and keys over to my father, absconding at the same time, till I saw how matters turned out. I was excessively cast down and dispirited at this time; and I remember of being greatly mortified at hearing what passed between two Kelso girls, whom I overtook on my way to Edinburgh. "Wha's that impudent chap?" said the one. "He's a broken merchant i' our town," replied the other. "What right has a creature like him to come an' keek intil fo'ks' faces that gate?" said the first. I felt myself terribly degraded, and was glad to get out of hearing; but their words did not go out of my head for a month.

My father craved time; which was granted. As soon as he had looked over the state of my affairs, he took the debts all upon himself, and gave security for the whole at six and twelve months. He sold off the stock by public roup; and, though some of the goods were sold at a disadvantage, when all was settled there was a reversion to me of L.160, over and above the sum that he had advanced to me at first. Though he was pleased to find things terminate so well, he was grieved at my having given up a business that promised to turn out to such advantage, and expostulated with me in a very serious manner—a thing which he had never done before. I remember every word of one sentence that he said to

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me that day; it was very nearly as follows: "Ye're still but a young man yet, son, an' experience may noozle some wit intil ye; for it's o'er plain ye hae muckle need o't. I fear I may say to you, as the good auld man, Jacob, said to his son Reuben, 'that ye are unstable as water, and shall not excel. He that abideth not by the works of his hands, nor is satisfied with the lot that falleth unto him, shall lift up his voice by the way-side, and no man shall regard him; because he regarded not the voice of him that begat him, nor listened to the words of her that gave him birth.' Son, I hae likit a' my bairns weel; but I had the maist hope o' you. My heart was prooder o' ye aften than I loot on; but gin it be the Lord's will to poonish me for that, I maun e'en submit. I canna be lang wi' ye now. I maun soon leave ye, an' gang to my lang hame; but there's nought will bring my grey hairs sae soon to the grave, as to see the improodence o' my bairns: an' O I wad like weel to see you settled i' some creditable way; i' some way that ye might enjoy peace and quiet i' this life, an' hae time to prepare for a better. The days o' pleasure an' mirth will soon be o'er wi' ye; an' when ye come to my time o' day, there will be mony actions that ye'll rue, an' this last will be ane amang the lave. Is it not a strange thing that you, who are sae clever at every thing, can yet succeed in naithing?"

I resolved to do better; but I was Jack of all trades, and master of none. I had now a small sum of my own, which I never had before; and having never yet cost my father much money, the choice was still left to myself what I would try next. When a young man gets his own choice, he is very apt to fix on the profession that his father followed, especially if he has been fortunate in it; and so it was with me at this time. When, as I conceived, I had learned to calculate matters aright, I fixed on the life of a farmer, and determined to be industrious, virtuous, and sober. I even resolved to marry a wife—a rich

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one, and be the first man in the country; and, as far as I can judge from my own experience, in every man's views of life, that forms a principal part. My father approved of my plan, but at the same time gave me many charges, never again to think of changing that honest and creditable profession for any other; "for I gie ye my word, son," said he, "that a rowin' stane never gathers ony fog; and ane had better late thrive than never do weel." I promised steadiness, and really meant to keep my word; and I do not think that ever any person had higher hopes of happiness than I had at that time. I was about to enter on that course of life which all men covet, from the highest to the lowest. What do the merchant and manufacturer toil for, but for a competence to enable them to retire to a farm in the country? What do the soldier and the professional man risk their health and life for in foreign climes, but for the means to enable them to retire to a farm in their native country? And this happy and envied state I was about to enter into in the flower of my age, and in the prime of life. I laid out all my plans of life in my farm-house: they were perhaps a little too luxurious, but altogether they formed an Eden of delight. I calculated on my crops so much an acre—on my cattle so much a-head;—the produce was immense!—quite sufficient for the expenditure of a gentleman. I was so uplifted in my own mind at my unexampled good fortune, that my words and actions were quite eccentric. I hurried from one place to another, as if every moment had been of the utmost importance; when on foot I ran, and when on horseback I gallopped. I am sure the cautious and prudent part of the community must have laughed at me; but I perceived it not, and thought that every one admired me for my cleverness. The farmers thereabouts are rather a well-bred class of people, and none of them ever tried either to mortify or reprehend me, but suffered me to take my own way. From the rugged freedom of

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the peasantry, however, I got some severe rebuffs. I was one day riding into Dunse in fine style, having set off at the gallop, without being well aware of it: "Hallo! stop!" cried a brown-looking peasant, with a spade over his shoulder; and I wheeled round my horse in the middle of his career. "What's wrang wi' ye, lad? Are ye a' weel eneugh at hame?" "To be sure we are, you dog; what do you mean?" said I. "O, gin ye be a' weel, that's eneugh. I thought ye war outher riding for the doctor or the houdy," (midwife,) said the horny-knuckled rascal, and chop'd on his way, gaping as he went.

At another time, I was hiring a lad at a fair in Greenlaw, but parted with him about some trifle. Thinking afterward that I was in the wrong, I called to him as he passed, intending to give him all that he asked; but not knowing his name, I accosted him thus—"Hallo, you fellow with the white stockings, come hither." He looked aside to me with the greatest contempt—"An' wha the deil was't made you a gentleman an' me a fellow?" said he; "the kail-wife o' Kelso, I fancy: or was't the salts an' senny leaf?"—Another time, at a wedding, I chanced to dance a good deal with a pretty country maiden, named May Glendinning, and kept her sitting on my knee, being resolved, if possible, to set her home at night. Her sweetheart was grievously chagrined at this, but could not help it. "What's come o' May, Geordie?" inquired one; "I think ye hae tint May a' thegither the night." "I canna get her keepit a minute," said Geordie, "for that stickit shopkeeper."

A loud roar of laughter ensued, at which I was highly incensed, and resolved to be revenged on the clown. I kept May the whole night, and after many entreaties, prevailed on her to suffer me to accompany her home. We went into her father's byre, and sat down on some clean hay to court. I said a great many kind things to her, not one of which was

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true, and always between hands endeavoured to prejudice her against Geordie. I said he was a low ill-bred rascal, and no match for such a lovely and lady-looking maid as she; and many bitter things I uttered against him: among others, I vowed, that if I saw such a dog as he touch but the palm of her hand, I would kick him. That moment I was rudely seized by the collar. "Come on, then, maister shopkeeper," said a rough voice, in the dark, at my side; "here's Geordie at your service; an' I think he can hardly deserve his brikfast better frae you than ye do frae him." I seized him in the same manner, and in that violent way we led one another out. Burning for revenge, I meant to have given him a merciless drubbing. On getting fairly out we struggled hard; but, as bad luck would have it, I fell undermost, and that just in the vile quagmire at the root of the dunghill. There the wretch held me down until the wheezing liquid abomination actually met above my breast; then, giving me two or three blows on the face, he left me with a loud laugh of scorn, saying, as he struggled through the mud, "It's no ilka chapman that maun try to lick the butter aff Geordie Bailley's bread." The dog was of the race of the gypsies. I went home in a miserable plight.

Having expended the greatest part of the money that my father advanced to me in stocking my farm and furnishing my house, I saw that I would soon want money, and determined on having a wife with a fortune instantly. Accordingly I set out a-wooing to one Miss Jane Armstrong, the daughter of a wealthy and respectable farmer. I proved a very awkward lover; and though nothing ever pleased me so much as courting the servant girls, when courting a woman that I really esteemed, I felt as if performing a very disagreeable task. I did not know what to say, for it was a new kind of courting that I neither understood nor relished; it was too systematic and ceremonious for me. However, I thought, that on getting her for my wife all that kind of flummery would be over; and

I persisted in my suit, till at length matters came to be understood between us, and nothing remained to do but to name the day. I rather esteemed than loved Miss Armstrong, and went about the whole business rather as a matter of duty than in consequence of a fond attachment.

About this time I chanced to be over in Teviotdale on some business, where I met with a Miss Currie, with whom I was quite captivated. She was handsome, lively, and full of frolic and humour, and I never was so charmed with any lady in my life. I visited her every week, and still became more and more enamoured of her. She treated me so kindly, and with so little reserve, that for three months I never went to see Jane Armstrong but once. The Armstrongs took this heinously amiss, and, all at once, without giving me any notice, the lady was married to a cousin of her own, a baker in Coldstream. I was not even invited to the wedding.

I felt this as a great weight taken off my shoulders, and plied my suit to Magdalene Currie: but to my mortification I soon afterwards learned, that the reason why she received me with so much ease was because she did not care a farthing about me, having all the while been engaged to another, to whom she was joined in wedlock a short time after. I looked exceedingly sheepish, and did not know what to do. I could no more set out my head among the ladies, so I went home and courted my own housekeeper.

This was a delightful amusement; but it was a most imprudent and dear-bought one. From the time I began to toy with this girl, I found that I was no more master of my own house: she did what she pleased, and the rest of the servants followed her example. If a man wishes for either honour, credit, or success in life, let him keep among females of his own rank—above it if he will, but not lower.

I was, moreover, always of an ostentatious and liberal turn of mind: I kept a good table, and plenty of French brandy

in my house, which at that time cost only 1s. 6d. per Scots pint. My neighbours discovered this; and though I never invited any of them, for in truth I did not want them, yet there was seldom a day passed that I did not receive a visit from some of them. One came to hear such and such a tune, which he wanted to learn; another, a song of mine that he could not get out of his mind; and a third, merely to get a crack, and a glass of brandy and water with me. Though I always left my farming and joined them with reluctance, yet, after drinking a glass or two with them, these ill humours all vanished, and I drank on, sung, and played my best tunes; and we never failed to part in great glee, and the most intimate friends in the world. This proved a great source of uneasiness to me, as well as expense, which I could ill afford. Though it grieved me, yet I could not put an end to it; and the same scenes of noise and riot occurred once or twice, if not six times every week. The servants joined in the same laxity and mirth; and, leaving the door half open, they danced to my tunes in the kitchen. This drew my elevated friends away from me to join them; after which a scene of wrestling and screaming ensued, and, all that I could do, I lost the command of my house and family.

My familiarity with my lovely housekeeper still continued, and for a whole year I was like a man going about with his eyes tied up, who might have seen well enough could he have suffered himself to look. Suppose such a man, though he were sensible that he was going astray, yet would not think of taking away the bandage, and looking about him to see again where the right path lay, but, thinking it capital sport, would continue the frolic and run on. It is not easy to conceive such a fool, but exactly such a one was I.

I soon had some pregnant proofs that the days of my housekeeping were drawing towards a conclusion. The failure of my crops, and the insurmountable indolence of my servants

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without doors, not to mention the extended prospect within, all announced to me, that of my hopeful household there must necessarily be a dispersion. I judged it a far easier and more convenient mode of breaking up the concern, for me to go and leave them, than to be making my delightful housekeeper, and all her irregular, lazy, and impudent associates, pack up their baggage and leave me. I perceived before me a system of crying, whining, and obloquy, not to mention church anathemas, that I could in nowise encounter; so, as the war was then raging in America, I determined on going there in person, to assist some of the people in killing their neighbours. I did not care much which of the parties I joined, provided I got to a place where I should never see nor hear more of my drunken neighbours, profligate servants, lame horses, blighted crops, and unprofitable housekeeper.

I acquainted my brother with my resolution; and notwithstanding of his warmest remonstrances, I persisted in it. So he was obliged to take my farm, for fear I should give it to some other; and as he considered it a good bargain, he gave me a fair valuation of all my farm-stocking. We settled every thing ourselves, and that as privately as possible. I applied at the war-office, and there being then a great demand for young men of spirit to go out to America, I found no difficulty in purchasing an ensign's commission in a regiment then lying in Lower Canada. In the course of a few days I turned my back on my native place, and my face towards the western world, in search of something—I did not know what it was, but it was that which I could not find at home. Had I reflected aright, I would have found it was prudence; but I would not suffer myself to reflect, for my conduct at that time was not calculated, on a retrospection, to afford much consolation; but I hoped, in a life of danger and anxiety, to experience that sort of pleasure which is the result of hope and variety.

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I do not intend here to give even the general outlines of our progress in America: my own private memoirs, which I am writing, are quite a different matter, and I fear will be found too much in unison with my former behaviour and general character. I have often thought, that the more one suffers in mind from any misfortune, the more apt he is to fall again into the same improprieties that caused it. Moral philosophers may account for this—I cannot; but of this I am sure, that my whole life has been fraught with instances of it; and on taking a general review of the actions of men, I persuade myself that it prevails to a degree that no casualty can account for. I had no sooner made my escape, disgracefully enough, from a disagreeable dilemma with one girl, than I got into another much worse.

On my route to America, I joined, at Cork, a Lieutenant Colin Frazer, who was conducting out two companies of recruits to join our transatlantic army; and of course I was a subordinate officer to him. I never liked him from the beginning; he was too selfish and conceited of himself, and pretended to be so much of a gentleman, (though he had never before been from the banks of Loch Ness in the Highlands,) that it was impossible to know how to speak to him. I could not speak English otherwise than in the broadest Border dialect, while he delivered himself in a broken Highland jargon, at which I could never contain my gravity. With all this, we were obliged to be constantly together at mess, as well as other times; and from the moment that we first met, my nature seemed, even to myself, to have undergone a complete change. Perhaps the idea of being now a soldier contributed greatly to this; but, from being a good-natured, careless, roving, absurd fellow, I became all at once proud, positive, and obstreperous; and, in keeping up these dignified pretensions, I daresay was as absurd as in the conducting of my mercantile and farming transactions. Still, I cannot help thinking it

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was this haughty overbearing Highland devil that stirred up these unnatural propensities in my breast. We never looked one another openly and frankly in the face, when we conversed together; or if we did, it was with a kind of sneer: and our custom was to sit opposite one another, with averted eyes, and cut and snub one another all that we could, still pretending to be in good humour, yet all the while full of bitterness and gall.

This state of affairs was soon brought to a climax by my spirit of gallantry. Among the few females that were in the ship, there was one Clifford Mackay, a most beautiful, angelic young lady, from the Highlands. The moment that I saw her, I was seized with a strong curiosity to know all about her, and what her motives were for going out to America; and my curiosity was mixed with the romantic passion of love. I saw that she and Frazer were acquainted, and indeed he appeared to be her only acquaintance on board; but he behaved to her with such reserve, and kept at such a distance from her in public, that I was altogether astonished how he could behave in such a manner to so sweet a creature, and marked him down in my mind as a cold-hearted insensible vagabond of a fellow. This apparent neglect endeared the lady still more to me, and interested my heart so much in her, that I could scarcely ever keep from her company. There was no little kind office that lay in my power that I did not proffer, no attention that I did not pay; at which Frazer would often sneer in the most insulting way. "'Pon my wort, Miss Mackay, put you'll pe ketting exhellent attensions," he would say; or at other times, "Shurely you'll pe unter fery much kreat oblighations to the worthy and callant ensign." I was so imprudent one day, in an ill humour, as to repeat one of these sayings, in his own tone and dialect, in mockery. He gave his mouth a twist, curled up his nose, and turned round on his heel, saying at the same time, "You shall pe answering for

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this py and py, my prave fellow." "O that I will, I daresay," said I, as saucily as might be. In the meantime I plied the beautiful Clifford, until her heart was melted, and she told me her whole story, and a most interesting story it was: unluckily for me, there happened not one word of it to be true, an inference which I would have been the last man in the world to have drawn. I proffered myself her friend and protector, in the most noble and disinterested manner; and though these were not frankly accepted, still they were by degrees admitted, until at last they terminated as all these generous and benevolent protections of the fair sex do. I was blessed beyond measure in the society of this adorable and delicate creature; and as Frazer now kept a shy distance from both of us, I had as much of her delightful company as I chose. I really felt exceedingly happy with this angel, and began to value myself highly on my personal accomplishments, that had thus gained me the affections of such a lady in so short a time.

She was going to live with her brother, a man of great consequence in Upper Canada, and under the care of Frazer, who was an acquaintance of her father's. I engaged to see her safely there, if he failed in the charge he had undertaken, or to assist him in it as far as lay in my power; and on reaching her brother's house, why, marriage was a thing to happen of course; but on that subject we did not talk much. As we neared to the shores of America, she still spoke less and less of her brother, who at one time was her sole discourse; and after coming to anchor in the St Lawrence, she never more mentioned his name, unless in answer to some question that I chanced to ask concerning him; and when our baggage was removed from the ship into boats, I observed that Frazer took no notice whatever of either her or her effects. I thought I likewise perceived a kind of despondency in my charmer's looks that quite overcame me, and I resolved to dedicate my life to her. I never durst look forward to the future, or calculate with

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myself what were to be the consequences of this amour; but these came upon me much sooner than I could have presumed.

We sailed for three days up the river, after quitting the vessel. Clifford, Frazer, and I, were in the same boat, and also an Irish and an English gentleman. Our noble lieutenant spoke next to nothing, but upon the whole did not behave uncivilly. We came at length to a village on the north side of the river, where we were obliged to land, and wait some days for the arrival of other troops and some waggons. Being now got fairly to land, and in a place where retirement was easy to be obtained, which hitherto had been impossible, Frazer had resolved to let me know what I was about. Accordingly, the next morning after our arrival, I was waited upon by the Irish gentleman who came with us, who presented me with a challenge from the lieutenant. I never was so confounded in my life, and wist not what to do or say; but read the note over and over, I do not recollect how oft. Macrae, the Irishman, noticed my dilemma, which I daresay amused him, and then calmly inquired what answer he was to return to his friend. "The man's out of his judgment," said I. "I do not see," said he, "how you can draw that inference from any thing that has passed on the present occasion. Certainly he could not do otherwise than demand satisfaction of you for the gross manner in which you have insulted him, by seducing his ward and friend; and that avowedly, it being a transaction that was neither hid from the ship's crew, nor from the men he is destined to command." "The devil run away with him and his ward both," said I. Macrae burst out a-laughing, and remarked, that that was no answer at all to send to a gentleman; that as he had the greatest respect for his friend, he would not hear a repetition of such ribaldry; and that, after what he had seen and heard of my behaviour, he judged it more meet that I should be beaten like a dog before the men, and hooted from the

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king's service in disgrace. In my confusion of ideas it had never occurred to me, that I was now obliged to fight a duel with any one who liked, or be disgraced for ever. So, plucking up a momentary courage, I wrote a note in answer, accepting his challenge as soon as I could procure a friend to be my second. The English gentleman, Mr Dow, who had accompanied us from Britain, being lodged in the same house with me, I applied to him for advice, and stated the matter exactly to him. He said it was an ugly job, and he feared there was no alternative but fighting the gentleman, unless I chose to make every concession, and be disgraced. "As to either the grace or disgrace of the matter," said I, "I do not mind that a pin; but as I suspect the gentleman has been very shabbily used by me, I will rather make any concession he chooses to name, than fight with one I have wronged. I do not approve of fighting duels. My religious principles do not admit of it." He smiled and shook his head. "I believe," said he, "you are a very honest good fellow, but you are a simple man, and know nothing of the world. You must leave the matter entirely to me. I suspect you must fight him, but, as he is the challenger, you have the right of choosing your weapons. I will however wait upon him, and shall bring you off if I can." "For God's sake do," said I; "I will rather make any acknowledgment he likes, than kill the honest brave fellow, and have his blood on my head, after having offended him by hurting him in the tenderest part." "O that will never do," said he; "never talk of concessions, just in the outset of life; leave the matter wholly to me, and behave yourself like a man and a Scotsman, whatever be the issue." I promised that I would; and away he went to wait on Frazer, my insulted lieutenant. How I did curse his hot Highland blood to myself, and wished him an hundred times at the bottom of Loch Ness, or on the top of the highest of his native hills, never to come down again till the day of judg-

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ment. I then cursed my own imprudence; but amid all my raving and execrations, I attached no blame to the lovely and gentle Clifford Mackay. The preference that she had given to me over Colin Frazer, her Highland friend, acted like a hidden charm in her behalf.

I now began to consult seriously with myself what weapons I should make choice of. I could in nowise bow my mind to pistols, for I found that I could not stand and be shot at. I accounted myself as good a marksman as any in Britain, but that I reckoned of no avail. What did I care for killing the man? I had no wish to kill him, farther than by so doing I might prevent him from killing me at the next fire, and on that ground I would have aimed as sickerly as possible. I would not have minded so much, had I been sure of being shot dead at once; but to get a ball lodged inside of me, and have my nerves wrecked and teased by bungling American surgeons trying to extract it, was the thing that I was determined on no consideration to submit to. I would not have a doctor twisting and mangling my entrails, in search of a crabbed pistol bullet, for no man's caprice, nor woman's neither; so I determined not to fight with pistols.

I tried to discuss the merits of the small sword; but it was a vile insidious weapon, and worse than the other, if worse could be; a thing that came with a jerk by the wrist, as swift as lightning, and out through one's body in a moment. The blue holes they made through one were very unseemly, and not to be cured. There were something, upon the whole, very melancholy in the view of the issue of a duel with small swords; so I resolved to decline fighting with them.

The broad-sword? Why, it was a noble weapon; but to trust myself under the broad sword of an enraged Highlander would be a piece of as desperate temerity as braving the bolt of heaven. Besides, I had never learned to fence. Still, however, a man had it in his power to defend himself against

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that weapon, and there was a great deal in that—he might use some very strenuous exertions for that purpose; and if nothing else would do, an honourable retreat was in his power. Upon the whole, though I did not approve of trusting myself under such a weapon, in such hands, yet I rather leaned to that than any other; or, on second thoughts, I judged that it would be as good, and as genteel, to make choice of the swords that we were, which were neither broad nor small ones, but something between the two, and not remarkable for their sharpness.

Mr Dow returned; and in the most calm and friendly way, informed me that he found it a very disagreeable business, much more so than he thought meet to disclose to me, till he saw what would be the issue. I asked if nothing but my life would satisfy the fellow? He answered, that he would not be satisfied with any concessions that a gentleman could make; that if I kneeled before all the men, and confessed that I had wronged him, and begged his pardon, he would be satisfied, but with nothing less. "Why," says I, "since you think the gentleman is so grossly wronged, I do not see why I should not do this." "By the Lord, sir," said he, with great fervour, "if you do that, you are lost for ever. Consider, that in so doing, you not only confess your error, but confess that you are a coward; and the next thing that you must do is to hide your head from every human acquaintance. I have considered the case as my own, and conceive that there is no other method of procedure, but to give the gentleman the satisfaction he desires, and on that ground I have appointed the hour and the place of meeting. It is to be in a lane of the adjoining wood, at seven o'clock in the evening; the choice of the weapons is left to you."

"Why should it not be just now?" said I. "The sooner any disagreeable business is over the better; and as for the weapons, to give him every advantage, since I have been the

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aggressor, I'll give him the weapon for which his country is so much famed. We will decide it with our swords. Does he think that men are mice?"

Dow gave me a slap on the shoulder, and, with a great oath, swore that that was said like a man; "and I'll go and tell your opponent that," added he, "which, I trust, will stun him." I had now taken my resolution, and went away with him to the place quite courageously, though all the while I scarcely knew what I was doing, such a tremor had taken hold of me. Dow's looks cleared up. He went away and warned Frazer and his second of my mortal impatience for the combat, and then we two walked in the grove awaiting their arrival; and, after all, they were not in any great hurry. When they arrived, our seconds insisted on our shaking hands. To this I had no objections in the world, but I saw that Frazer would rather have shunned it; he held out his in the most proud disdainful way, while I with great bluntness took hold of it, and gave it a hearty squeeze and a shake. "Captain, man," says I—and I fear the tear was standing in my eye—"Captain, man, I little thought it would ever come to this with us!" "You did not, did you?" replied he; "and fat te deol did you pe taking her to pe?" and with that he flung my hand from him.

"Well, well, captain, here's for you, then," says I, drawing out my sword and brandishing it in the air. "Pooh, pooh! te deol, tamnation, and haill!" ejaculated he; and, turning away his face, twisting his nose as if something had offended it, he drew out his sword, and, stretching out his arm, put its edge to mine, with such marks of disdain as never were before witnessed by any living creature. I struck with all my might, thinking to hit him a dreadful smash on the head or shoulder, and cleave him to the teeth, if not to the heart; but he warded the blow with the greatest indifference, and attacked me in return. I had now to defend myself with my

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utmost puissance; which I did instinctively, by keeping my arm at full stretch, crossing my sword before me, and making it ply up and down with the swiftness of lightning; and a most excellent mode of defence it is—one that I would recommend to any man placed in such circumstances as I then was. So effectual did it prove, that Frazer, with all his science, could not touch me. He still followed up his advantage, and pressed hard upon me, as he well might, for I had now no leisure again to strike at him, I was so strenuously intent on defending myself, and had so much ado with it. He came closer and closer on me; and in the meantime I fled backwards, backwards, till at length one of my heels coming in contact with the stump of a tree, I fell flat on my back. He rushed forward to disarm me; but, in my trepidation and confusion, I had no idea of any thing except resistance, and even in that awkward position I struck at him again. It seems that a Highlandman does not know so well how to ward a stroke that comes upwards on him, as one that comes down, for with that stroke I wounded him both in the belly and the wrist. This so incensed the ragamuffin, that, placing his one foot on my sword arm, near the shoulder, and the other on my belly, he put his sword's point to my mouth. I roared out; but the savage that instant struck me in at the mouth, and pinned my head to the ground. I had never fought since I was at the school, and wrought merely as it were by random, or rather instinct. I had no conception remaining with me, but the boyish one of retaliation as long as that was in my power; so making a desperate effort, with a half-arm stab I wounded him in behind, sticking my sword directly in a part of his body which I do not choose to name. This made him spring forward and fall; and the whole of this catastrophe, from the time that I fell on my back, was transacted in two seconds, and before our friends had time to interfere; indeed I am never sure to this day but that they both viewed it as a piece of excellent sport. However, they

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now laid hold of us, and raised us up. I was choked with blood, but did not feel very much pain. All that I particularly remember was, that I was very angry with Frazer, and wanted to get at him to kill him; and instead of being afraid of him, I would then have given all that I had in the world to have had the chance of fighting him with pistols. He was as much incensed; for, when Dow supported me away towards the river, he was lying groaning, and swearing in broken English—"Cot's heverlasting tamn!" I heard him say, "tat she shoult pe mhortally killed py such a crhaven of a lowlands bhaist! such a treg of te chenerations of mans! phoor mhiserable crheature! tat she should pe putting her pike into te pehinds of te shentlemans! hoh, hoh! pooh, pooh, pooh!"

There was no surgeon in the village save a farrier, that bled American horses, men, and women, alternately, as occasion required, and he being first engaged by my adversary, there was no one to dress my wound, but Mr Dow and the unfortunate Clifford, who, poor soul, when she saw me all bathed in blood, and learned what had been the cause of it, burst into tears, and wept till I thought her heart would break. One of my jaw-teeth was broken out; but otherwise the wound turned out to be of little consequence, the sword having gone merely through my cheek in a slanting direction, and out below the lap of the ear. It incommoded me very little; but it was otherwise with poor Colin Frazer, who was pronounced by all that saw him to be mortally wounded, though he himself affected to hold it light.

The other body of recruits and the baggage-carts at length arriving, we continued our march, Frazer causing himself to be carried in a litter at the head of the troop, until we arrived at Quebec. Here he had the advice of regular surgeons, who advised him not to proceed; but no cognizance was taken of the affair, farther than the examination of witnesses, whose

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depositions were taken down and signed. The head-quarters of the regiment which we were destined to join lying still a great way up the country, at a place called St Maurice, the command of the body of recruits devolved on me. The men that joined us last, at the village of Port Salmon, were mostly Irishmen, and commanded by a very young man, named Ensign Odogherty. He was a youth according to my own heart, full of frolic and good humour; drank, sung, and lied without end; and I never was so much amused by any human being. The other Irishman, Macrea, remained at Quebec; but Dow still went on with us. I found he meant to join the army as a gentleman volunteer.

One night, when we were enjoying ourselves over a glass at a petty village, Dow chanced to mention my duel. I requested him not to proceed with the subject, for it was one that I did not wish ever to hear mentioned again as long as I lived. Odogherty, however, having merely learned that such an event had occurred, without hearing any of the particulars, insisted on hearing them from end to end; and Dow, nothing reluctant, recited them with the most minute punctuality. Odogherty's eyes gleamed with delight; and when the other came to the conclusion, he rose in silence, holding his sides, and keeping in his breath till he reached a little flock-bed, where, throwing himself down, he continued in a roar of laughter for a quarter of an hour, save that he sometimes lay quiet for about the space of a minute to gather his breath.

When he had again composed himself, a long silence ensued. After a storm comes a calm, they say; but it is as true, that after a calm comes a storm. Little did I ween what a storm this calm was brewing for me; but found it soon to my experience.

"Now, my dear friend," said Dow, "that you are past any danger from your wound, and I hope from all ill consequences

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of this rough and disagreeable affair, pray, may I ask if you know who this young lady is, or of what extraction or respectability she is of, for whom you have ventured your life and honour, and whom you have thus attached to yourself?"

"I know that very well," replied I. "My Clifford is a young lady of as high respectability as any in the shire of Inverness, though her father is not rich; but that is a common occurrence with Highland gentlemen, especially those that are generous and best beloved; besides, she is one of a numerous family, and named after an English countess, who is her godmother. Her father is Neil Mackay, Esq. of the town of Inverness; and she has a brother in Upper Canada, who holds the highest commission but one under government in all that country. It is to him that I am conducting her, and I hope to do it in safety."

"Not with safety to yourself, I should think," rejoined he. "You should surely, my dear sir, re-consider this matter, else you will certainly have more duels to fight than one. Do you conceive it such a light thing to seduce a young lady of quality? Or how could you set up your face to her brother, a man of such rank, after the way that you have publicly lived with his sister?"

Never had such an idea as this entered my head; the thing most apparent, one would think, of any in the world. But, as I said before, I never durst trust myself to reflect on the consequences of this amour; these had all to come on me in course. I could not answer Mr Dow a word, but sat gaping, and staring him in the face, for a good while, At length I exclaimed, with a deep sigh, "What the devil shall I do?"

"Why," said Odogherty, "I think the way that you should take is plain enough behind you, to look forward I mean. The young creature is ruined to all purposes and intents, and will never be a woman of credit at all at all, unless you marry her. On my conscience I would marry her this

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instant; that I would; and make her an honest woman to herself."

I looked at Dow, but he remained silent. I then said, that I thought our young friend's advice had a great deal of reason in it, and to marry her was the best way, if not the only thing I could do. Dow said, that at all events I might ask her, and hear what she said, and we would then consult what was best to be done afterwards.

I posted away into the little miserable room where she sat, resolved to marry her that night or next morning. I found her sitting barefooted, and without her gown, which she was busily employed in mending. "My dear Clifford," said I, "why patch up that tawdry gown? If your money is run short, why not apply to me for some wherewith to replace these clothes that are wearing out? You know my purse is always at your service." She thanked me in the most affectionate terms, and said, that she feared she would be obliged to apply to me by and by; but as yet she had no need of any supply, my kindness and attention to her having superseded any such necessity.

"I am come, my dear young friend," said I, "at this moment, on an errand the most kind and honourable to you. We are now entering on the territory in which your relation holds a high command, and it is necessary, before we come to his presence or even into the country over which he holds control, both for your honour and my own safety and advancement, that we be joined in the bands of wedlock. I therefore propose, that we be married instantly, either to-night or to-morrow morning."

"You will surely, at all events, ask my consent before you put your scheme in practice," returned she.

"Yes, most certainly," said I; "but after what has past between us, I can have no doubt of the affections and consent of my lovely Clifford."

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"You will however find yourself widely mistaken," replied she.

"Is it possible!" said I; "is it in nature or reason, that as circumstances now stand with us, you can refuse to give me your hand in marriage? Does my adored Clifford, for whom I have risked my life, my honour, my all, then not love me?"

"God knows whether I love you or not!" exclaimed she; "I think of that you can have little doubt. But as to marrying you, that is a different matter; and I attest to you once for all, that nothing in the world shall ever induce me to comply with that."

"And is this indeed my answer?" said I.

"It is," said she; "and the only one you shall ever get from me to that question. I therefore request you never again to mention it."

I went back to my two companions, hanging my head, and told them the success of my message; but neither of them would believe me. I then returned to Clifford, and taking her by the hand, led her into the room beside them, barefooted and half-dressed as she was; and placing her on the wicker chair at the side of the fire, I stood up at her side in a bowing posture, and expressed myself as follows:

"My beloved, beautiful, and adorable Clifford; ever since we two met, you have been all to me that I could desire, kind, affectionate, and true. I have consulted my two friends, and before them, as witnesses of my sincerity, I proffer you my hand in wedlock, and to make you mine for ever. And here, upon my knees, I beg and implore that you will not reject my suit."

"Rise up, and behave like yourself," said she, with a demeanour I never before saw her assume; "you do not know what you ask. Once for all, before these gentlemen, as witnesses of *my* sincerity, I hereby declare that no power on earth

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shall either induce or compel me to accept of your proposal; and, as I told you before, that is the only answer you shall ever get from me. Suffer me therefore to depart." And with that she hastened out of the room.

"By St Patrick!" cried Odogherty, "the girl has gone out of her senses, to be sure she has. On my conscience! if she has not dropt the reasoning faculty, she has picked up a worse, and by the powers! I will prove it, that I will."

"On my soul, I believe the creature has some honour after all!" exclaimed Dow, leaning his brow upon his hand.

"What do you mean, sir, by such an expression?" said I; "Whom do you term, creature; Or whose honour do you call in question?"

"Hush!" said he; "no foolish heat. I beg your pardon. I am sure you cannot suppose that I mean to give you any offence. In the next place, I must inform you, that this lovely and adorable lady of quality, for whom you have ventured your life, and whom you have just now, on your knees, in vain implored to become your wife, is neither less nor more than a common street-walking girl from the town of Inverness."

My head sunk down, till my face was below the level of the lamp, so as to be shaded in darkness. I bit my lip, and wrote upon the table with my finger.

"It is indeed true," said he; "I know all about it, and knew from the beginning; but I durst not inform you at that time, for fear of your honour as a soldier, which I saw stood in great jeopardy. Her father, indeed, is a Neil Mackay of the city of Inverness; but, instead of being a gentleman, he is a mean wretched cooper, a poor tippling insignificant being, who cares neither for himself nor his offspring. Her mother was indeed a woman of some character, but she, dying of a broken heart long ago, poor Clifford was thrown on the wide world while yet a child, and seduced from the path of rectitude before she reached her fifteenth year. Lieutenant Colin

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Frazer, your friend, being at Inverness on the recruiting service, chanced to fall in with her; and seeing her so beautiful and elegant of form, and besides possessed of some natural good qualities, he decked her out like a lady in the robes in which you first saw her, and brought her with him as a toy, wherewith to amuse himself in his long journey."

I could not lift up my face, for I found that it burnt to the bone; but there I sat, hanging my head, and writing on the table with my finger. Odogherty had by this time betaken himself to his old amusement, of lying on the flock-bed, and holding his sides in a convulsion of laughter. Dow seemed half to enjoy the joke, and half to pity me. So, thinking the best thing I could do was to take myself off, I ran away to my bed without opening my lips.

Poor Clifford bathed and dressed my wound as usual, but we exchanged not a word all the while. She imagined, that I was very angry and sullen, because I could not get her for my wife, and that I took it heinously amiss; and when she had done dressing my cheek she impressed a kiss upon it, and I felt one or two warm tears drop on my face very near my own eye. Duped as I was, I found my heart melted within me, with some feelings about it that whispered to me, she must be forgiven. If ever I had merit in any thing that I did in my life, it was in my tenderness to this poor unfortunate girl. I could not for the soul of me that night have mentioned Neil Mackay, Esq. of the city of Inverness, nor yet his excellency the deputy-governor of Upper Canada. I declare, that I never more mentioned the names of these two august personages in her hearing. I deemed that she had thrown herself entirely at my mercy, and I thought it was cruel to abuse my power.

Nevertheless, I spent a very restless night. If I recollect rightly, I never closed an eye, so dissatisfied was I with my conduct. Here was I come out a desperate adventurer, going

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to join a gallant regiment commanded by a brave and reputable officer, with pay that would barely keep me from starving, yet I behoved to make my appearance at head quarters with a fine lady in my keeping, and that same fine lady a common town-girl, picked up on the streets of Inverness, the daughter of a scandalous drunken cooper. My blood being so heated, and my nerves irritated by the brandy I had drunk the night before, that I felt very much inclined to hang myself up by the neck. In this feverish and disgraced state, I formed the resolution, before day, of deserting over to the Americans; but as I could not think of leaving the forlorn Clifford behind me, I disclosed to her my whole design. She tried to dissuade me, but I remained obstinate, till at length she flatly told me that she would not accompany me, nor any man, in so dishonourable and disgraceful an enterprise; and that if I persisted in going away, she would instantly give intelligence of my flight, and have me retaken and punished.

"You ungrateful wretch!" said I; "Do you know what you are saying? Dare you take it upon you to dictate to me, and hold me under control as if I were a child?"

"No," replied she; "I never dictate to you; but I see you are dissatisfied with something, and unwell; and were you to take this rash step, I know you would repent it as long as you lived. I am not so far enslaved to you but that I still remain the mistress of my own will; and I shall never assent to any measure so fraught with danger as well as disgrace."

I was going to be exceedingly angry, and mention the cooper and the deputy-governor to her, and I do not know what all; but she, dreading that some violent outbreak was forthcoming, stopped me short by a proposal, that I would at least take eight and forty hours to consider of it; and if I remained of the same mind then, she would not only accompany me, but devise some means of escape safer than could be decided on all at once. I felt extremely mortified, at being thus outdone, both

in reason and honour, by a wench; however, I could not refuse my acquiescence in this scheme; and I confess, I am aware, that to this poor girl I owed at that time my escape from utter infamy, and perhaps a disgraceful end.

On reaching St Maurice, we were all joined to General Frazer's regiment, save seventeen men, who were sent with Mr Dow to supply a deficiency in a company of Colonel St Leger's regiment; and the very day after our arrival, we set out on a forced march to oppose the Americans that were approaching to Montreal. Here I was obliged to leave Clifford behind, who, with other retainers of the camp, a much more motley train than I had any notion of, were to come up afterwards with the baggage. Before taking my leave of her, I gave her a new gray frock trimmed with blue ribbons, handsome laced boots, a bonnet and veil, and was not a little proud to see how well she became them, and that there was in fact no lady either in the camp or country that looked half so beautiful. Every officer who chanced to pass by her was sure to turn and look after her, and many stood still and gazed at her in astonishment. There is something in the face of a real Highland lady, more majestic and dignified than that in any other of the inhabitants of the British islands; and this poor unfortunate girl possessed it in a very eminent degree. No one could see her without thinking that nature had meant her to occupy some other sphere than the mean one in which she now moved.

I do not, as I said before, intend to describe this campaign; for I hate the very thoughts of it; but I cannot resist giving here an account of the first action that I was in. It took place at the foot of Lake Champlain, immediately above Fort St John. The Americans were encamped in some force on the height of a narrow fortified ridge of hills, from which it was necessary to displace them. We marched out to the attack early on a morning. The air was calm and still. In going up the

slanting ground, our commander wisely led us by a rout which was completely sheltered by a rising eminence from the effects of their cannon. I soon perceived that, on reaching the summit of this ridge, we would be exposed to a fire which, I had no doubt, would kill us every man, while our enemies might fire in safety from behind their trenches. What would I have given to have been on some other service; or, by some means, have avoided going up that hill! I am not sure but that I looked for some opportunity of skulking, but I looked in vain; and it was not even possible for me to fall down among the dead, for as yet no one had fallen. I was in the front rank on the left wing, and very near the outermost corner. Just before we came to the verge of the ridge, I looked on each side to see how my comrades looked, and how they seemed affected. I thought they were all, to a man, terribly affrighted, and expected a clean chase down the hill. As soon as we set our heads over the verge, we began a sharp fire, which was returned by a destructive one from their works, and our men fell thick. The two next men to me, on my right hand, both fell at the same time, and I made ready for flight. A bullet struck up a divot of earth exactly between my feet. I gave a great jump in the air, and escaped unhurt. "The devil's in the men!" thought I, "are they not going to run yet?" The reverse was the case; for the word *quick march* being given, we rushed rapidly forward into a kind of level ground between two ridges. Here we halted, still keeping up a brisk fire, and I scarcely saw one of our men fall. It was the best conducted manœuvre of any I ever saw; but this I discovered from after-conversation and reflection, for at that time I had not the least knowledge of what I was doing. We were by this time completely covered with smoke, and being hurried from the ridge into the hollow, the shot of the Americans now past cleanly and innocently over our heads, while at the same time we could still perceive them bustling on the verge be-

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tween us and the sky; and I believe our shot took effect in no ordinary degree. Their fire then began to slacken, for they had taken shelter behind their trenches. We now received orders to scale the last steep, and force their trenches at the point of the bayonet. We had a company of pikemen on each flank, but no horse, and the Americans had a small body of horse, about sixty on each wing. As we went up the hill, I heard an old grim sergeant, who was near me, saying, "This is utter madness! we are all sold to a man." The murmur ran along, "We are sold—we are sold;—to a certainty we are sold;" and my ears caught the sound.—For my part, I knew little either of selling or buying, except what I had seen in the market at Kelso; but I said aloud, "I think there can be little doubt of that;"—a shameful thing for an officer to say! Then, looking round, I made as though I would turn again—No, devil a man of them would take the hint—but rather went the faster; and the old burly ill-natured sergeant, though assured that he was sold to destruction, and puffing and groaning with ill-humour on that account, hurried on faster than any of the rest.

The centre and right wing were engaged before us, and a terrible turmoil there seemed to be; but I did not see what was going on, till the Yankee horse, in a moment, came and attacked our flank. We had been firing off at the right; but I believe, they never got a shot of our fire until they were among us, threshing with their sabres. One tremendous fellow came full drive upon me. Not knowing in the least what I was doing, and chancing to have a hold of my flag-staff with both my hands, I struck at him with my colours, which, flapping round the horse's head, blindfolded him. At the same moment the cavalier struck at me; but, by good luck, hit the flag-staff, which he cut in two not a foot from my hand, and I ran for it, leaving my colours either about his horse's head or feet. I did not stay to examine which; but,

owing to the pikes and bayonets of our men, I could only fly a very short way. When the old crusty sergeant saw the colours down and abandoned, he dashed forward with a terrible oath, and seized them, but was himself cut down that moment. The dragoon's horse, that left the ranks and came upon me, had been shot. I deemed that he had come in desperate valour to seize my standard, whereas his horse was running with him in the agonies of death, not knowing where he was going. There is something here that I do not perfectly recollect, else, I declare, I would set it down. I have forgot whether my joints failed me, and I fell in consequence; or whether I threw myself down out of desperation; or if I was ridden down by the wounded horse; but the first thing I recollect was lying beneath the dying horse, face to face with the dragoon, that cut my flag-staff in two, who was himself entangled in the same manner. Our troops had given way for a little, for the small troop of horse rode by us, over us they could not get, for the horse that was lying kicking with its four feet upmost. I thought I was in a woful scrape, and roared out for assistance; but no one regarded me, save the Yankee dragoon, who d—d me for a brosey-mou'd beast. I liked his company very ill, for I knew that he would stick me the moment he could extricate himself; and, being fairly desperate, I seized the sergeant's pike or halbert, that lay along side of me, and struck it into the horse's shoulder. The animal was not so far gone but he felt the wound, and making a flounce about, as if attempting to rise, I at that moment got clear of him. The dragoon had very near got free likewise; but, luckily for me, his foot was fixed in the stirrup beneath the horse, and with all his exertions he could not get it out. However, he laid hold of me, and tried to keep me down; but I seized hold of the sergeant's halbert again, pulled it out of the horse's shoulder, and stabbed the Yankee through the heart. The blood sprung out upon me, from head to foot—his eyes turned round, and his countenance

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altered. At that moment I heard a loud voice, as at my ear, cry out, "The colours! the colours! secure the colours! This was the voice of an American officer; but I thought it was some of our people calling to me to bring my colours along with me, which I did instinctively, and without the most distant idea of valour or heroism in my mind. At that moment I cared not a pin for the colours, for, being quite raw to soldiership, I did not see the use of them, and I had not the least conception of what moment it could be to an army to have so many flaring clouts flapping in the air above them.

This onset of the Yankee horse was merely a dash to throw our lines into confusion; for they were now scouring away, fighting as they went, toward the centre, and I joined our lines again, that were advancing rapidly, without any interruption. I had my demolished flag in one hand, the dead sergeant's long halbert in the other, and bathed with the blood of man and horse over my whole body. An old English officer came running to meet me: "Well done, young Scot," cried he, and shook me by the hand: "by G—, Sir, I say, well done! you have behaved like a hero!" "The devil I have," thought I to myself, and staring the old veteran in the face, I saw he was quite serious. "If that is the case," thought I, "it is more than I knew, or had any intention of;" for I was quite delirious, and knew not what I was about; and, I remember that, on the very evening of that day, the transactions of the morning remained with me only as a dream half recollected. The old man's words raised my madness to the highest pitch. I swore dreadfully at the Yankees—threw down my colours, and began to strip off my coat, the first thing that a countryman of Scotland always does when he is going to fight with any of his neighbours. "No, no," said the old Lieutenant, "you must not quit your colours after fighting so hardly for them; you must not throw them away because they have lost the pole." He then took the colours, and giving them a hasty roll

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up, fixed them in my shoulder behind, between my coat and shirt, where they stuck like a large furled umbrella. Having now both my hands at liberty, I seized the long bloody halbert once more, and with my eyes gleaming madness and rage, and, as I was told, with my teeth clenched, and grinning like a mad dog, I rushed on in the front of the line to the combat. In a moment we had crossed bayonets with the enemy; but I had quite the advantage of their bayonets with my long pike, which was as sharp as a lance, and the best weapon that since that time I have ever had in my hand. It seems I did most excellent service, and wounded every man that came within my reach, pricking them always in the face, about the eyes and nose, which they could not stand. Our division was the first that entered both the first and second trench; and after twelve minutes hard-fighting with swords and bayonets, they were drove from them all, and fled. When once I got their backs turned towards me, I was more bent on vengeance than ever, having learned by experience in my first combat, that spitting a man behind was good sure fighting. Many of the enemy shared the same fate of Colin Fraser.

At the fords of the river Champley, the Americans gaining the wood, were safe from the pursuit, and a full halt was ordered. No sooner had we formed, than my worthy old friend, the English officer, whose name I then learned was Lieutenant George Willowby, came, and taking me by the hand, he led me up to the general, precisely as I was in the battle, with my colours fastened most awkwardly in my clothes, my long halbert in my hand, and literally covered with blood. "My honoured general," said he, "suffer me to present to you this young Scotch borderer, who has newly joined the regiment, and who hath performed such deeds of valour this day as I never witnessed. I saw him, your honour, with my own eyes, when the American cavalry turned our flank, in the very rear of

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their army, down among his enemies fighting for his colours, and stabbing men and horse alternately like so many fish. And, "do you see," continued he, pulling them out of my back, "he brought them safely off, after the staff was cut in two by the stroke of a sabre. And having them fixed in this manner, as your honour sees, he has led on the lines through the heat of the engagement, and actually opened the enemy's ranks again and again by the force of his own arm."

The general took me by the hand, and said he was proud to hear such a character of his own countryman—that he knew a Scot would always stand his own ground in any quarter of the world, if he got fair play—that he did see the division, in which I was situated, the foremost in breaking in upon both lines, which it appeared had been solely owing to my gallant behaviour. He concluded by assuring me, that such intrepidity and heroic behaviour should not, and would not, go unrewarded. That same night, Odogherty, who cared not a fig for lying, took care to spread it through all the mess, and the army to boot, "that, on my first landing in America, I had been challenged to single combat by a tremendous Highlander, the first swordsman in Britain, because I had chanced to kiss his sister, or used some little innocent familiarities with her; that I had accepted the challenge, met him, and fairly overcome him; and after running him twice through the body, had made him confess that he was quite satisfied, while I, as they saw, had only received a slight cut on the cheek."

I was regarded all at once as a prodigy of valour—and never were any honours less deserved. I believe I did fight most furiously after I went fairly mad, and had lost all sense of fear; but I was merely plying and exerting myself, as a man does who has taken work by the piece, and toils to get through with it. I had some confused notion that these Americans were all to kill, and the sooner we could get that done the

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better; and, besides, I was in great wrath at them, I suppose, for wanting to kill me.

This acquisition of honours gave a new turn to my character again. I determined to support it with my life, and was engaged early and late in perfecting myself in all warlike exercises. I was given to understand, that I would be raised to the rank of lieutenant in the course of three weeks, and had little doubt of being soon at the head of the British forces. There was one principal resolution that I formed in my own mind on this my sudden elevation. It was the generous one of parting with Clifford Mackay. I thought it was base that there was no one to enjoy the emoluments and pride of my growing rank, but the daughter of a despicable Highland cooper—a wench brought up among girds and shavings, or perhaps in a herring barrel. The thing was quite incongruous, and would never do! so I began to cast about for a lady of great riches and rank, and made many knowing inquiries, but could not hear of any that was grand enough in all America. Odogherty thought proper to take advantage of this vain presumption, and brought me into some vile scrapes. In the mean time, I longed exceedingly for the arrival of Clifford, from whom I had now been a long time separated; but it was principally that I might tell her my mind, and put her upon some plan of providing for herself. The baggage and ladies at length arrived at Montreal, escorted by Major Ker, and three companies of dragoons. The officers went down by lot to see their friends, and my turn came the last of any. I was rejoiced to find that our general himself, and the greater part of our officers, had acquaintances that stood in the same relation with them as Clifford did to me; and not a little proud to see them all outdone by her in beauty. It was rather a hard matter to part with so much beauty, sweetness, and affability; but, considering the great figure that I was to

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cut in life, it was absolutely necessary; so, just before we parted, I made up my mind to the task.

"Clifford," said I, with a most serious and important face, "I have a proposal to make to you, which I like very ill to make; but both for your sake and my own, I am obliged to do it."

"I am in the very same predicament with regard to you," replied she; "I had a proposal to make, which has been at the root of my tongue for these twelve hours, and could never find its way out; for there was something below it that always drew it back. But now that you have mentioned proposals, I find it is at liberty. Suffer me therefore to make my proposal first, and do you make yours afterwards. You must know then, that there is scarce an officer in your regiment who has not tried to seduce my affections from you, and some of them have made me very tempting offers. I have made a resolution, however, never to be either a mistress or wife to any one in the same regiment with you, and under your eye; but Major Ker of the dragoons has made me an offer, that will place me in affluence all the rest of my life. I am afraid that you will weary of me, for I will become burdensome and expensive to you, and your pay is small; and therefore I would not give him any answer, until I asked at you whether I should suffer myself to be seduced by him or not."

I was thunderstruck with astonishment at the simplicity and candour manifested in this proposal, and stood gaping and staring at her a good while without having a word to answer. There is a great difference in giving up an object voluntarily, and having it wrested from you. "I am very much obliged, in faith," said I, "to Major Ker of the dragoons, as well as my brother officers! confound them for a set of dishonourable knaves! There is one, I am sure, that would not yield to be

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guilty of such a discreditable act, my friend and companion, Ensign Odogherty."

"Bless your simple heart," said she; "Ensign Odogherty was the very first man among them who made the proposal, and what I refused to his blarney he was like to have taken by force. He is a perfect devil incarnate, that Odogherty."

"The young Irish dog!" exclaimed I, "I'll cut his throat for him."

"If you would presume to cut the throats of all who offend in that particular," replied she, "you may exercise your skill on every officer in the army. I never yet knew an officer in the British army, neither old nor young, and I am sorry that I speak from experience, who would not seduce his friend's mistress, or even his wife or sister, if he found it convenient."

"It is an abominable system!" exclaimed I, "and ought to be reprehended. I would not seduce the wife, or sister, or mistress of a friend, for——"

"Hush!" said she, laying her hand upon my mouth; "you might have left out the last. And do you ever, in the pursuit of your pleasures, consider, that among all our sex, who is she that is not wife, sister, or daughter to somebody? But this is wide of the subject of my proposal, which you have not answered."

"Are you tired of me, my dearest Clifford?" said I, "and would you wish to leave me for another? If so, I scorn to retain you by force. But you may well know that I would rather give up all the world than part with you. And as to wealth, take no thought of that, for I have large funds that I brought from home, which I have as yet scarcely touched; and moreover, I am already promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and expect to be a captain in a very short time. But, if you should leave me, what would all these additions of wealth avail me?"

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So much are we the children of caprice, I have often been ashamed on looking back to my actions, to see in what manner I have been swayed by the meanest of all motives. Every thing was soon made up between Clifford and me, and she continued living under my protection for three succeeding years. I never found it convenient to get a very rich wife, nor practicable to rise any higher in the army than a poor lieutenant. Indeed, there was an incident occurred, that had very nearly been the cause of my being reduced to the ranks.

Our army was a most licentious one; the men were brave, but they had no other good quality, and gaming prevailed to a degree among the officers that can scarce be credited. No opportunity of intriguing with the ladies of the country was let slip; and though we were often almost starved to death for want of meat, we were generally drunk once in the twenty-four hours, often for a considerable portion of that time at once. Moreover, all of them had their mistresses, either hanging about the camp, or at no great distance from it; and, for the whole of the two last winters that I remained there, our head-quarters presented the most motley scene that can be conceived of dissoluteness and meagre want. We depended mostly on the supplies sent from England for our sustenance; but these became more and more uncertain; and, though I valued myself on being able to bear these privations better than my associates, I often suffered so much from hunger, that I never saw meat but I coveted and took it, if I could conveniently come by it.

The officers of our regiment were invited to dine with a gentleman, of great riches and high respectability, in the district of New York, not far from the place where we were then stationed. The entertainment was elegant and expensive, and we drank with great liberality. Gambling commenced, and was carried on, with much noise and little regularity, till after midnight. All the while there was a long table stood behind covered with

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viands, at which every man helped himself as he pleased. At length we all went off, a little before day, in a state of high elevation. Our path lay down a narrow valley by the side of the river Tortuse. Odogherty, and a Lieutenant Jardine from Annandale, were immediately before me, going arm in arm, and excessively drunk. I kept near them, unperceived, for the sake of getting some sport, and soon saw, to my astonishment, that they made a dead halt. On drawing nearer them, I heard that they were consulting about the best means of getting over the river. I was amused beyond measure at this, and could not comprehend the meaning of it, for the path did not lead across the river, which was quite impassable on foot. The moon shone almost as bright as day, while I stood at their backs, and heard the following dialogue:—

Odog. By the powers, and I believe we are come to the end of our journey before we have got half way, that we have.

Jar. Od man, my head's no that clear; but I canna mind o' wading ony water as we came up. I fear we're gane wrang.

Odog. How the devil can that be? Have we not come straight up the path that goes down the side of the river? There is no other road but that; so we must either push on or turn back.

Jar. By my trouth, man, an' I think we had better turn back as drown oursel's, an' lippen to the man for quarters. He's a cannie discreet man.

Odog. By my shoul, but I know better than to do any such thing. Don't you see that all the rest of the gentlemen have got over? There are none of them here.

Jar. It maks an unco rumbling noise, man. What will we do gin it tak us down?

Odog. Why, come up again, to be sure.

Jar. Weel, weel; gie's your arm. Here's wi' ye, Captain Odogherty—Gin Sandy Jardine dinna wade as deep as ony

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chap in a' Airland, deil that he gang down the gullots like a flowy peat. Here's wi' ye Maister Odogherty.

Odog. Don't be in such a hurry, will you not, till I be ready before you?—Think you, I will spoil all my fine clothes?

Jar. Oh, ye're gaun to cast aff, are ye? Gude faith, Sandy Jardine will let his claes tak their chance, there's mae whar they cam frae.

Odogherty stripped off his stockings and shoes, and tied his buckskin breeches around his neck, and giving his arm to his inebriated companion, they set forward with undaunted resolution, either to stem the roaring stream, or to perish in the attempt. I had by this time squatted down with my face to the earth, and was almost dead with laughing, having discovered their grotesque mistake. The moon was shining bright on the road all the way, but at this place a group of tall trees, that rose between the path and the river, threw a shadow right across the road; and hearing the rushing sound of the river behind the trees, they concluded that it was that which intercepted their way. Indeed I never witnessed a stronger deception; for the beams of the moon, trembling through the leaves, looked exactly like the rippling of the stream. Jardine roared and laughed, when he found that they were wading through a shadow, till he made all the woods ring, but Odogherty was rather affronted.

I joined the train; and we went on, laughing and making a noise, till we were interrupted by the rest of the officers all in a group. A most disagreeable business had occurred. The gentleman with whom we dined had sent two household servants on horses by a nearer path, to waylay us, who, addressing themselves to the senior captain, for neither General Fraser nor our Colonel were present, informed him, that their master had lost a valuable gold snuff-box, set with diamonds, which he had been using all night at the table. The Captain rashly desired the men to begin by searching himself, and go on over all the company; and at the same time swore, that with whom-

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soever the box was found, he should suffer the most condign punishment.

The search was going on when we arrived, and we were instantly surrounded by those that had already undergone the fiery trial; but when the two Americans came to me, I refused to be searched. The Captain swore, that whoever refused to be searched should be drummed out of the regiment. I said I would refer that to a court-martial, and not to him; and, at the same time I swore an oath, that I would run the first man through the body who offered to seize on me, or put a hand in my pockets.—"Seize the dog! seize him, and down with him! We know with whom the snuff-box is now," —burst forth from every mouth. I was forcibly seized and disarmed, but afterwards, shaking myself loose, I dealt among them some lusty blows with my fists, and never perhaps did I fight with more inveterate desperation. It was to no purpose, for I was pinioned fast by numbers, and searched. Wo be unto me!—The grinning American took out from one of my coat pockets a roasted wild turkey deprived of a wing, and out of the other an immense black pudding. I was grievously mortified; and would rather have died on the spot.

When they came to search Odogherty, they found him bare-footed and bare-legged, and without the *small clothes*, (as the ladies now with great indelicacy term them): "How does this come about, Sir?" said the Captain; "what is become of the rest of your dress?"

"O, plaise your honour I have lost them."

"Lost them! have you lost your clothes off your body? The thing is impossible."

"To be sure, and I have. Look, your honour, here are the shoes; and, look you, here are the stockings; but the braiches, I fear, are quite gone."

"You must have *taken* them off for one purpose or another?"

"To be sure, and I did; and it was for fear of wetting them

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too; for, your honour, they cost me a pound all to nothing, so I would not be after wetting them, and so I put them round my neck, your honour.

"Ensign, this is the most absurd story I ever heard, and argues very little in your favour. How the devil could you wet your clothes, when there is neither rain nor dew?"

"Bless your honour! there is another way of wetting braiches besides all these, and that there is; and now, when I remember, it was to wade the water that I stripped them off, and tied them round my neck."

"You are either mortal drunk, or in a dream. What water did you cross?"

"The devil take me away, if I know what water it was; but, o' my conscience, there was a river running, roaring, and tumbling across the step of a road—and so I knew from the sound that it would be after taking me up to the middle—and so I threw off braiches and all, your honour—and so Jardine and I waded across—and by the powers it was no river at all at all."

"The fellow is trifling with us! take his sword from him, and take him likewise into custody; and see that diligent search be made for the part of his clothes, which, it is evident, he hath secreted."

At this time one of the officers, feeling something entangling his feet, put down his hand to feel what it was, and brought up the fine buckskin breeches of Odogherty, all trampled and abused.—They were searched, and in the pocket was found the gentleman's gold snuff-box. The Captain and all the officers were highly incensed against Odogherty and me, crying out, that we had disgraced them in the eyes of all the country. Odogherty swore by all the saints in the calendar that he was innocent; or that, if he had put up the worthy gentleman's box, out of which he had snuffed all the evening, it must have been by a very simple and common mistake. "And, by Jasus!" said he, addressing the captain, "had

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you but proclaimed the matter, and suffered every man to search his own pockets, the gentleman would have got his box, and the honour of the corps had been preserved."

Every one felt that what the Ensign said was sound sense in this instance. Circumstances, however, were strong against him; and as to my shameful crime, there was nothing to be said in extenuation of it; so, to degrade us as much as possible, we were hand-cuffed and conducted to the guard-house.

We were tried by a court-martial. I was condemned to three months imprisonment, and then to be degraded into the ranks; a most iniquitous sentence for such a trivial affair, but the officers were irritated at me beyond measure.

They asked me if I had any thing to say for myself why this sentence should not be executed?

I said that I would disdain to say a word, but, if there was any honour left among mankind, I should yet be righted.

I said this merely from the irritation of the moment, and without any reference to one circumstance connected with the affair. It was however a lucky phrase, and made some impression on my judges at the time, who looked at one another, as visibly suspecting there might be some trick. I was nevertheless remanded back to prison.

Odogherty was next brought in, and being desired to speak for himself, that the judges might hear what he had to bring forward in his defence, he thus addressed the audience:

"Plaise your honours, the first thing that I must be after spaiking about is not of myself at all at all. I have been told by the mouths of those that conducted me hither, that you have been to pass a sentence, and a hard one enough too, on the other gentleman that was after stealing the poodding. It is all blarney and absoordity together, and your honours must call back the words the moment you have said them; for it was I that put the stooff into his pocket, to be a laugh upon

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him; and he is as unguilty of the whole affair, as the child that is not after being born."

"Are you positive of what you say?" said the chief judge.

"Positive? by the shoul of Saint Patrick and that I am too. He had taken a beautiful maid from me that night: he had won all my money, and I had cut out of the game; so to amuse myself, and have some little revenge on him, I took the opportunity, when he was busy at play, to stooff his pockets for him; and that is the truth, your honours, to which I am ready to make oath, whenever, and as often as you have a mind."

Now this was all a contrivance of Odogherty's, but it was a generous and a good-natured one. There was not a word of it true; but this singular youth had the knack of setting off a lie better than the plain truth; and the manner in which he interested himself in the matter, and expressed his sentiments of it, together with what I had said in court, not only staggered the judges, but convinced them that what he had stated was the fact. The presiding judge, however, said to him, "Ensign, when once your own character is cleared, we will take your affidavit on this matter. As the case now stands, you cannot be admitted as a witness in this court."

Odogherty's guilt was very doubtful. It was proved that he had stripped to wade an imaginary river, and that in the frolicksome mood in which he and his associates were, it had never occurred to his mind to dress himself again, till they were surrounded by the rest of the officers. There was only one thing against him, and that was the losing of his breeches at such a convenient time. But on the other hand, to counterbalance this, it so happened, that as soon as the box was found, all further search ceased; and it was proven, that he who had found the *small clothes* never had himself been searched, so that the box was actually not found in the possession of Odogherty. After long discussion, a verdict of *not proven*

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was returned, and the Ensign was acquitted. For my part, I never know to this day, whether he stole the box or not. No one could calculate on what Odogherty might do either good or bad.

My case was again brought under review. The Ensign swore to all he had said. Some doubts arose on the circumstance of the determined resolution I had manifested not to be searched. "O bless your honours," said Odogherty, "nothing in the world but sheer drunkenness; he would have fought with a flea that night. I was glad you all set on him and pummelled him down, or I should have been forced to fight him myself." The final consequence was, that my sentence was reversed, and my sword and rank restored to me.

I was perfectly conscious of having pocketted the victuals myself; and as soon as I was alone with my friend Odogherty, I mentioned the matter to him, when, to my utter astonishment, he declared to my face that I did no such thing, and that he put them there for me; disclaiming, at the same time, any regard for me, but only for *the truth*. Of all the inconsistencies I had ever seen or heard, this excelled; but as expostulation on my part would have been absurd, I only observed that "I regarded perjury in a very serious point of view." "Pough!" said he, "It is nothing at all at all! I would rather trust myself to the mercy of God than to that of these d—d *connoters* at any time." I knew not what he meant by this term, nor would he inform me

The last winter that I passed in America was with General Howe in Philadelphia, where we disgusted the inhabitants very much by our irregularities. Many of the officers, as well as men, formed matrimonial connexions, which they never meant to observe any longer than they remained in that place. Others introduced their mistresses into respectable families, which at last gave great offence. Being sick of an ague when I arrived in the city, I boarded Clifford with an elderly

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maiden lady in the suburbs, as my sister; and the lady being very devout and strict in her principles, I thought proper, by Clifford's advice, to visit there but seldom, and with much ceremony and deference to both. The old lady soon grew as fond of Clifford as ever a mother was of a child.

This lady was living in narrow circumstances, but she had a brother that was the richest man in New Jersey, though he seldom paid any regard to her; but seeing a dashing beauty with her every day at church, on whom the eyes of all were constantly turned, his visits to his neglected sister were renewed, after having been discontinued for many years, while at the same time, her circumstances appeared to be bettering every day, as did also those of her lodger, who every week had some new additions to her dress. I grew jealous in the extreme, and determined once more to part with the huzzy, whatever it might cost me; though I was obliged to acknowledge to myself, that of all women I had ever known, I had the least reason to be suspicious of her.

One holiday we were drawn up in files as the company were coming from church, when I perceived the most elegant and splendid creature I had ever seen, coming down the parade among the rest, leaning on the arm of a tall elderly gentleman. She was dressed in green silk, with a plumed bonnet, and veil of the same colour bound with crapes of gold. I was petrified with admiration, but more with astonishment, when, as passing by, she dropt me a low and graceful courtesy. At the same instant she whispered a word to her father, who looked at me, and saluted me with a respectful motion of the head. I could not comprehend it, as I was certain I had never seen either of them before.

I was paralyzed with love, so that my knees shook under me when I saw her turning a corner, where she vanished from my sight. I could not leave my place at that time, for there was no other lieutenant on duty; but my heart was set on dis-

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covering her, and from what I had seen, I could not doubt that she was desirous I should. I kept my secret and my situation of mind, however, close from all my brother officers. But being unable to take any dinner, I left the mess at an early hour, and walked up the river towards Burlington, where numbers of people were taking the air; but of my charmer I could see nothing. How my mind yearned to be quit of Clifford—I could not think of her with any degree of patience.

I came back to the town as it grew late, and was sauntering about the corner, where I last saw this angelic creature, that had so completely turned my brain. A little chubby servant maid came up, who looked in my face, and smiled as if she knew me. I thought I was acquainted with the face, but had not the least recollection where I had seen it. I chucked her under the chin, and asked if she would accompany me to such a place? "Indeed I will do no such thing," replied she.

"But, my dear," said I, "I have something of the greatest importance to say to you."

"Say it here, where we are then," said she, naming me; "there needs not to be any secrets between you and I."

"And who the devil are you, my pretty little dear?" said I; "for though I know you perfectly well, I cannot recollect your name. If you will tell me that, I am ready to make all due acknowledgments?

"I will keep that to myself," returned she, "to learn you to look better about you when among friends. But say what you have to say; for I must not be standing chatting with a gentleman on the street at this time of the evening."

"Then first of all," said I, "before I tell you how much I am in love with yourself, can you tell me who the beautiful lady is, that came down from church to day clad in green silk, and leaning on the arm of her father?"

The urchin dimpled, and eyed me two or three times with

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a suspicious look; but seeing that I was quite serious, she burst into such a fit of laughter, that I was utterly ashamed, and it was long before I could get another word out of her; but convinced that she knew something of the matter, I would not quit her altogether.

"Are you really quite serious in what you have asked?" inquired she at length, while her eyes were swimming in tears from her excess of merriment. "Upon my honour I am," said I; "there is not any thing on earth I would not give to know who that adorable creature is, and what are her connexions."

After the provoking imp had indulged in another hearty laugh, she came close up to me, and, smirking in my face, said: "Well, captain, in the first place, I have to inform you, that she is reckoned the most beautiful woman that ever was seen in the states of America. In the second place, that it is believed she will be married in a few weeks to a gentleman of the first rank; and in the third and last place, that she is in love with you, the most imprudent thing perhaps that ever she did in her life, and yet she makes no secret of it. But is it possible, captain, that you do not know that I am her servant, and wait on her, and that you did not see me walking behind her to-day?"

"No, I'll be d—d if I did, my dear," said I; "but the next time that you pass with her, I promise that I shall note you. Nay, I promise that I shall never forget you as long as I live, if you will conduct me directly to the presence of that angelic lady."

"I will not take it upon me to do any such thing," replied she; "as far as I may judge, she is better engaged at present; but if you have any letter or message to send to the lady, I shall be very happy to deliver it."

I showered blessings upon her, shook her by the hand, and desired her to wait for me five minutes; and going into a

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tavern, I wrote a most flaming epistle of love, and darts, and despair, to this object of my adoration, and vowed everlasting fidelity, craving at the same time to be admitted to her presence. This epistle I gave to the girl, being fully resolved to watch her home; but she perceived my drift, and gave me the slip, by going into a mean house, and, as I suppose, out at a door on the other side, for I waited there till it was dark, and saw no more of her.

The next day I received the following letter from the servant in the house where I resided. It was written in a round old fashioned hand, which I had never seen before, and I could not help wondering how such an angelic creature wrote in such a curious antiquated style; but at the contents I wondered still more.

"Sir,—Yours I received. I heard your deeds, and have known you, by seeing you longer than mentioned. Inquiries are making to character; if it conform to favour, I shall not say how glad I will be, or what lengths go for your sake; particularly of a certain young lady, I hope it is not true. Be secret; but trust not that I will see you till cleared of that. Your humble servant, R. Y."

It was plain to me, from this, that the lady was in love with me; but that having heard some suspicious story about Clifford, she was going to make inquiries. I was not afraid of any discoveries being made there, if they came not from my brother officers; for I had behaved always to her as a brother, and a kind one, since we came to that city; but, to make sure of my new flame, I determined to part with her instantly, and accordingly I wrote to her that I could see her no more, and enclosed a note for L.50. She waited on me next day in the plain russet dress in which I arrayed her. When she entered my apartment my blood rushed to my head, and

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I scarcely knew what I did or said; for my heart smote me, and I felt that I had done wrong. She had been kind and faithful to me; and saved my life and honour by preventing me from deserting; had bathed and dressed my wounds, and cheerfully shared all my fortunes. But instead of complaining, she addressed me in the same kind and familiar style as she was wont, and only begged of me, that now since we were to part, we should part good friends. She said, that understanding the regiment was soon to march on a long and perilous enterprise, she rather wished to be left behind; for she was tired of following the camp, and that now since she knew my mind she was resolved to marry. "Marry! My dear Clifford," said I, "whom do you mean to marry?"

"A very decent worthy man," said she, "who is neither so young nor so rich as I would choose perhaps, but I want to begin an honest and decent life; you cannot imagine how much I begin to enjoy it already. I have only one request to make, that you will give me away as your sister, and behave to me as such on my wedding-day; which now, with your permission, shall be the day after to-morrow."

Overjoyed to find that I was like to get so well off, I promised every thing; hoping that now I should enjoy the idol of my affections, the lovely unknown, when this main obstacle was removed. She refused to keep my L.50, declaring she had no occasion for it, and I might have much: so I was not hard to persuade to take it again. This was a very shabby mean action. I might have, and ought to have, insisted on her keeping it, as a small marriage portion for the sister of a poor officer; but I took it and put it in my pocket.

On the day appointed for the marriage, a servant came to inform me that the ceremony staid for me; I went reluctantly in my daily dress, knowing that I should be ushered in among a great number of the lower ranks; for not having made any minute inquiries, I took it for granted that Clifford was

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about to be married to some old doting artizan, or labouring manufacturer. Instead of that, I was ushered into one of the most elegant houses in the town, and to a select party of gentlemen and ladies. Among the rest I was introduced to a Mr Oats, to whom I bowed reservedly, not knowing who he was. The parson was ready, and shortly after the bride and her maidens were ushered in; but I looked in vain for Clifford, and knew not how to calculate on any thing that I saw: for any one may judge of my astonishment, when I perceived that she whom they led in as bride was my beautiful unknown, decked out like a princess, and veiled as before. I knew the air, the shape, the plumes and crapes of gold, at first sight, and could not be mistaken. I had nearly fainted. I felt as if I were going to sink through the floor, and wished to do it. Judging that I had come to the wrong wedding, or that they had sent for me there to mock me, I stared all about me, and twice or thrice opened my mouth to speak, without finding any thing to say. At length this angelic being came swimming through the company toward me, and, clasping me in her arms, she threw up her veil and kissed me. "My dear brother," said she, "I am so happy to see you here! I was afraid that you would not countenance me in this, nor give your consent to my remaining in a strange land." "My dearest sister," said I, "upon my soul I did not know you: but I never can, and never will, give my consent to part with you—never—never!" "What! did you not give me your word?" said she, "did you not promise that you would give your Clifford in marriage to the man of her choice with all your heart?"

"Yes I did; and I do still; but then I did not know who you were—that is, I did not know who somebody was, that is you—But I am very ill, and know not what I say, and therefore must beg that you will suffer me to retire." She entreated that her dearest brother would remain, and hon-

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our her nuptials with his presence; but I felt as if the house and all the wedding-guests were wheeling about; so I made off with myself in no very graceful manner. I was duped, confoundedly duped; yet I could hardly tell how: and besides, it was all my own doing, and of my own seeking. I never was so ill in my life, for such an infatuation had seized on me, that I could in nowise regard her whom I had lost as Clifford Mackay, the drunken cooper's daughter of Inverness, but as a new superlative being, who had captivated my heart and affections as by magic.

I could not but see that I had behaved disgracefully to her, and that she had acted prudently and wisely, both for herself and me; yet I was eminently unhappy, and kept myself from all company, as much as my duty would allow me, during the short time after that affair that I remained in Philadelphia. Mr Oats, to whom she was married, was a rich and respectable merchant and planter, and doted so much on her, that though he had been possessed of the wealth of America he would have laid it at her feet. He was brother to the lady with whom she lodged: and as I learned afterwards, never discovered that she was not in reality my sister. She had taken my family surname from the time that we first came there. It was a lucky marriage for her, as will soon appear.

We soon received marching orders, and set out on our celebrated western campaign, in which we underwent perils and privations that are not to be named. Our women all either died or left us, and there were some of them carried away by the Indians, and scalped, for any thing that we knew. I was in thirty engagements, in which we lost, by little and little, more than one third of our whole army. We were reduced to live on the flesh of our horses, and all kinds of garbage that we could find; yet for all that, we never once turned our backs on our enemies. We had the better in every engage-

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ment on the lakes, and upon land, yet all our brilliant exploits went for nothing.

I was disgusted beyond bearing with our associates, the American Indians; and the very idea of being in affinity with such beasts made every action that we performed loathsome in my eyes. The taking of those horrid savages into our army to destroy our brethren, the men who sprung from the same country, spoke the same language, and worshipped the same God with ourselves, was an unparalleled disgrace. Remorse and pity, with every sensation of tenderness, were entirely extinct in the breasts of those wretches, having given place to the most ferocious and unrelenting cruelty. They often concealed such prisoners as they took, that they might enjoy, without interruption, the diabolical pleasure of tormenting them to death. I never abhorred any beings so much on earth as I did these, and nothing would have pleased me so well in any warlike service as to have cut them all to pieces. I found two of them one evening concealed among some bushes, wrecking their devilish propensity on a poor American girl whom they had taken prisoner. They had her bound hand and foot, and were mincing and slicing off her flesh with the greatest delight. I could not endure the sight, so I cut them both down with my sabre, and set her at liberty; but they had taken out one of her eyes, and otherwise abused her so much that she died. Whenever we were in the greatest danger, they were most remiss; and at the battle of Skenesbury, where they should have supported our army, they stood idle spectators of the conflict, and seemed anxiously to desire that both sides should be exterminated. If the German auxiliaries had not come up and supported us, we had been cut off to a man. Their conduct was still more intolerable in St Leger's army, where they mutinied and deserted in a body, but not before they had scalped all their prisoners, and tormented them to death in cold blood. I

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never expected that we could prosper after our connexion with these hellish wretches.

At the dreadful encounter on the 7th of October, our regiment, that had suffered much before, was quite ruined; General Frazer himself being killed, with a great number of our best men; and the Germans, who supported us, almost totally cut off, so that we were compelled to yield ourselves prisoners of war. I received two bayonet wounds that day, which caused me great pain during our march. When we yielded, it was stipulated that we should be suffered to depart for Britain; but the Congress refused to ratify this, on account, I think, of some suspicion that they took up of the honourableness of our intentions, and we were detained in prison. It was while there in confinement that I saw and took an affectionate leave of Clifford. She had got permission from her husband to visit her dear and beloved brother, and came and staid with me two nights. On her return home she prevailed with her husband to use his influence in my behalf, which he did, and I obtained my liberty, being one of the few that Congress suffered to return home. The worthy old gentleman, after that, had a son that was christened by my name.

I embarked in the Swallow of Leith on the 11th of April. In our passage we suffered a great deal, both from the inclemency of the season and the ignorance of our crew. We were first wrecked in the straits of Bellisle, where we narrowly missed total destruction; and before we got the ship repaired, and reached the coast of Scotland, it was the beginning of October: we were then overtaken by a tremendous storm, and forced to run into a bay called Loch Rog on the west coast of the Isle of Lewis, where we found excellent moorings behind an island. Here I quitted the ship, being heartily sick of the voyage, intending to take a boat across the channel of Lewis, and travel over the Highlands on foot to Edinburgh.

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I staid and sauntered about that island a month, and never in my life was in such a curious country, nor among so curious a people. They know all that is to happen by reason of a singular kind of divination called the second sight. They have power over the elements, and can stop the natural progress of them all save the tides. They are a people by themselves, neither Highlanders nor Lowlanders, at least those of Uig are, and have no communication with the rest of the world; but with the beings of another state of existence they have frequent intercourse. I at first laughed at their stories of hobgoblins, and water spirits, but after witnessing a scene that I am going to describe, I never disbelieved an item of any thing I heard afterwards, however far out of the course of nature it might be. I am now about to relate a story which will not be believed. I cannot help it. If it was any optical illusion, let those account for it who can. I shall relate what I saw as nearly as I can recollect, and it was not a scene to be easily forgotten.

On the banks of this Loch Rog there stands a considerably large village, and above that the gentleman's house, who rents all the country around from Lord Seaforth, and lets it off again to numberless small tenants. Between his house and the village there lies a straight green lane, and above the house, on a rising ground, stand a great number of tall stones that have been raised in some early age, and appear at a distance like an army of tremendous giants. One day a party of seven from on board the Swallow was invited to dine with this gentleman. We went out a-shooting all the forenoon, and towards evening, on our return, we found all the family in the most dreadful alarm, on account of something that an old maiden lady had seen which they called *Faileas More*, (the Great Shadow), and which they alleged was the herald of terrible things, and the most dismal calamities. The villagers were likewise made acquainted with it, and they were running howling about in consternation.

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The family consisted of an old man and his sister; a young man and his wife, and two children: the old man and the two ladies believed the matter throughout, but the young man pretended with us to laugh at it, though I could see he was deeply concerned at what he had heard. The vision was described to us in the following extraordinary manner.

The Great Shadow never comes alone. The next morning after is M'Torquille Dhu's Visit. The loss of all the crops, and a grievous dearth in the island, invariably succeed to these. The apparitions rise sometimes in twelve, sometimes in three years, but always on the appearance of An Faileas More, Todhail Mac Torcill takes place next morning between day-break and the rising of the sun. A dark gigantic shade is seen stalking across the loch in the evening, which vanishes at a certain headland; and from that same place the next morning, at the same degree of lightness, a whole troop of ghosts arise, and with Mac Torcill Dhu (Black M'Torquille) at their head, walk in procession to the standing stones, and there hide themselves again in their ancient graves.

As the one part of this story remained still to be proved, every one of us determined to watch, and see if there was any resemblance of such a thing. But the most extraordinary circumstance attending it was, that it could only be seen from the upper windows of that house, or from the same height in the air, a small space to the eastward of that; and that from no other point on the whole island had it ever been discovered that either of these visions had been seen.

We testified some doubts that the morning might not prove clear, but the old man, and the old maiden lady, both assured us that it would be clear, as the morning of M'Torquille's Visit never was known to be otherwise. Some of us went to bed with our clothes on, but others sat up all night, and at an early hour we were all sitting at the windows, wearying for the break of day. The morning at length broke, and was

perfectly clear and serene, as had been predicted. Every eye was strained toward the spot where *the Great Shade* had vanished, and at length the young gentleman of the house said, in a tone expressing great awe, "Yonder they are now." I could not discern any thing for the space of a few seconds, but at length, on looking very narrowly toward the spot, I thought I perceived something like a broad shadow on the shore; and on straining my sight a little more, it really did appear as if divided into small columns like the forms of men. It did not appear like a cloud, but rather like the shadow of a cloud; yet there was not the slightest cloud or vapour to be seen floating in the firmament. We lost sight of it for a very short space, and then beheld it again coming over the heath, above the rocks that overhung the shore. The vision was still very indistinct, but yet it had the appearance of a troop of warriors dressed in greenish tartans with a tinge of red. The headland where the apparition first arose, was distant from us about half a mile,—they appeared to be moving remarkably slow, yet notwithstanding of that, they were close upon us almost instantly. We were told that they would pass in array immediately before the windows, along the green lane between us and the back of the village; and seeing that they actually approached in that direction, Dr Scott, a rough, rash, intrepid fellow, proposed that we should fire at them. I objected to it, deeming that it was a trick, and that they were all fellow creatures; for we now saw them as distinctly as we could see any body of men in the gray of the morning. The young man however assuring us, that it was nothing human that we saw, I agreed to the proposal; and as they passed in array immediately before the windows, we pointed all the eight loaded muskets directly at them, and fired on this mysterious troop all at once: but not one of them paused, or turned round his head. They all of them held on with the same solemn and ghostlike movement, still continuing in appearance to be walk-

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ing very slow, yet some way they went over the ground with unaccountable celerity; and when they approached near to the group of tall obelisks, they rushed in amongst them, and we saw no more, save a reeling flicker of light that seemed to tremble through the stones for a moment.

They appeared to be a troop of warriors, with plaids and helmets, each having a broad targe on his arm, and a long black lance in the other hand; and they were led on by a tall figure in black armour, that walked considerably a-head of the rest. Some of our people protested that they saw the bare skulls below the helmets, with empty eye sockets, and the nose and lips wanting; but I saw nothing like this. They appeared to me exactly like other men; but the truth is, that I never saw them very distinctly, for they were but a short time near us, and during that time, the smoke issuing from the muskets intervened, and, owing to the dead calm of the morning, made us see them much worse. All the people of the village were hid in groups within doors, and engaged in some rite which I did not witness, and cannot describe; but they took great umbrage at our audacity in firing at their unearthly visitors, and I believe there was not one among us, not even the regardless Dr Scott, who was not shocked at what had been done.

I make no pretensions to account for this extraordinary phenomenon, but the singular circumstance of its being visible only from one point, and no other, makes it look like something that might be accounted for. I can well excuse any who do not believe it, for if I had not seen it with my own eyes, I never would have believed it. But of all things I ever beheld for wild sublimity, the march of that troop of apparitions excelled—not a day or a night hath yet passed over my head, on which I have not thought with wonder and awe on *the Visit of M'Torquille.*

From that time forth, as long as I remained in Lewis, I

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considered myself in the country of the genii, and surrounded with spiritual beings that were ready to start up in some bodily form at my side, whenever they had a mind. Such influence had the vision that I had seen over my mind, and so far was it beyond my comprehension, that I grew like one half-crazed about spirits, and could think or speak about nothing else. For a whole week I lingered about the shores to see the mermaid; for I was assured by the people, that they were very frequently to be seen, though they confessed that the male as often appeared as the female. They regarded her as a kind of sea spirit, and ominous, in no ordinary degree, to the boatmen and fishers, but yet they confessed that she was flesh and blood, like other creatures, and that she had long hair, and a face and bosom so beautiful, that their language had no words to describe them. I was actually in love with them, and watched the creeks as anxiously as ever a lover did his mistress's casement; and often when I saw the seals flouncing on the rocks at a distance, I painted them to myself as the most delicate and beautiful mermaids, but on coming near them, was always disappointed, and shocked at the ugly dog's heads that they set up to me; so that after all, I was obliged to give up my search after mermaids.

They told me of one that fell in love with a young man, named Alexander M'Leod, who often met her upon the shore, at a certain place which they showed me, and had amorous dalliance with her; but he soon fell sick and died, and when she came to the shore, and could no more find him, she cried one while, and sung another, in the most plaintive strains that ever were heard. This was the popular account; but there was an old man told me, who heard her one evening, and watched her, from a concealment close beside her, all the time she was on shore, that she made a slight humming noise like that made by a kid, not when it bleats out, but when it is looking round for its dam, and bleating with its mouth shut; and

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this was all the sound that she made, or that he believed she was able to make. I asked why he did not go to her? but he answered in his own language, that he would not have gone to her for all the lands of *the Mackenzie.*

M'Leod, when on his death-bed, told his friends of all that had passed between them, and grievously regretted having met with her. He said they never met but she clasped her arms around him, and wished to take him into the sea; but that it was from no evil intent, but out of affection, thinking that he could not live more than she, if left upon dry land. When asked if he loved her; he said that she was so beautiful he could not but love her, and would have loved her much better if she had not been so cold; but he added, that he believed she was a wicked creature. If the young man could imagine all this without any foundation, people may imagine after what they list; for my part, I believed every word of it, though disappointed of meeting with her.

I was equally unsuccessful in my endeavours to see the water horse, a monster that inhabited an inland lake, of whom many frightful stories were told to me; but in my next attempt at an intercourse with the spirits that inhabit that dreary country, I had all the success that I could desire.

I was told of an old woman who lived in a lone sheiling, at the head of an arm of the sea, called Loch Kios, to whom a ghost paid a visit every night. I determined to see the place, and to tarry a night with the old woman, if possible. Accordingly, I travelled across the country by a wild and pathless rout, and came to her bothy at the fall of night, and going in, I sat down feigning to be very weary, and unable to move farther. We did not understand a word of each other's language, and consequently no conversation, save by signs, could pass between us. I found a miserable old shrivelled creature, rather neatly dressed for that country, but manifestly deranged somewhat in her intellects.

Before I entered, I heard her singing some coronach or

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dirge, and when I went in, I found her endeavouring to mend an old mantle, and singing away in a wild unearthly croon; so intent was she on both, that she scarcely lifted her eyes from her work when I went toward her, and when she did, it was not to me that she looked, but to the hole in the roof, or to the door by which I entered. The sight affected me very much, and in all things that affect me I become deeply interested. I heard that she was speaking to herself of me; for I knew the sound of the word that meant *Englishman*, but it was not with any symptoms of fear or displeasure that she seemed to talk of me, but merely as a thing that, being before her eyes, her tongue mentioned as by rote.

The story that prevailed of her was, that being left a widow with an only son, then a child at the breast, she nourished him; he became a man; and the love and affection that subsisted between them was of no ordinary nature, as might naturally be supposed. He was an amiable and enterprising young man; but going out to the fishing once with some associates to the Saint's Islands, he never returned, and there were suspicions that he had been foully murdered by his companions, the weather having been so mild that no accident could have been supposed to have happened at sea. There were besides many suspicious circumstances attending it, but no proof could be led. However, the woman hearing that she had lost her darling son, and only stay on earth, set no bounds to her grief, but raved and prayed, and called upon his name; conjuring him by every thing sacred to appear to her, and tell her if he was happy, and all that had befallen to him. These continued conjurations at length moved the dead to return. The spirit of her son appeared to her every night at midnight, and conversed with her about the most mysterious things—about things of life and death—the fates of kingdoms and of men; and of the world that is beyond the grave—she was happy in the communion, and abstracted from all things in this world beside.

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Such was the unearthly tale that was told in the country of this rueful old creature, and made me resolve to visit her before I left the island; but I could not procure a man in all the district of Uig to accompany me that could speak both languages; for except the minister and his wife, and one taxman and his family, there was not one in the district, which contained 3000 inhabitants, that could speak the English language, or were book learned. I procured a young lad to be my guide, named Malcolm Morison, but he having gathered something of my intentions before we left the banks of Loch Rog, would on no consideration accompany me into the cot, but left me as soon as we came in sight of it. I no sooner beheld the object of my curiosity, than I thought her crazy, and that the story might have arisen from her ravings. Still she was an interesting object to contemplate; and, resolving to do so for the night, I tried by signs to make her understand that I was a traveller fatigued with walking, and wished to repose myself in her cottage until next morning; but she regarded me no more than she would have done a strayed cat or dog that had come in to take shelter with her. There was one sentence which she often repeated, which I afterward understood to be of the following import, "God shield the poor weary Saxon;" but I do not know how to spell it in Earse. I could likewise perceive, that for all the intentness with which she was mending the mantle, she was coming no speed, but was wasting cloth endeavouring to shape a piece suiting to the rent, which she was still making rather worse than better. It was quite visible that either she had no mind, or that it was engaged in something widely different from that at which her hands were employed.

She did not offer me any victuals, nor did she take any herself, but sat shaping and sewing, and always between hands singing slow melancholy airs, having all the wildness of the native airs of that wild and primitive people. Those that she

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crooned were of a solemn and mournful cast, and seemed to affect her at times very deeply.

Night came on, and still she gave herself no concern at all about me. She made no signs to me either to lie down and rest in the only couch the hovel contained, or to remain, or to go away. The fire sent forth a good deal of smoke, but neither light nor heat; at length, with much delay and fumbling, she put some white shreds of moss into a cruise of oil, and kindled it. This threw a feeble ray of light through the smoke, not much stronger than the light of a glow-worm, making darkness scarcely visible, if I may use the expression.

The woman, who was seated on a dry sod at the side of the fire, not more than a foot from the ground, crossed her arms upon her knees, and, laying her head on them, fell fast asleep. I wrapt myself in my officer's cloak, and threw myself down on the moss couch, laying myself in such a position that I could watch all her motions as well as looks. About eleven o'clock she awoke, and sat for some time moaning like one about to expire; she then kneeled on the sod seat, and muttered some words, waving her withered arms, and stretching them upward, apparently performing some rite either of necromancy or devotion, which she concluded by uttering three or four feeble howls.

When she was again seated, I watched her features and looks, and certainly never before saw any thing more unearthly. The haggard wildness of the features; the anxious and fearful way in which she looked about and about, as if looking for one that she missed away, made such an impression on me, that my hairs stood all on end, a feeling that I never experienced before, for I had always been proof against superstitious terrors. But here I could not get the better of them, and wished myself any where else. The dim lamp, shining amidst smoke and darkness, made her features appear as if they had been a dull yellow, and she was altogether

rather like a ghastly shade of something that had once been mortal than any thing connected with humanity.

It was apparent from her looks that she expected some one to visit her, and I became firmly persuaded that I should see a ghost, and hear one speak. I was not afraid of any individual of my own species; for, though I had taken good care to conceal them from her, for fear of creating alarm, I had two loaded pistols and a short sword under my cloak; and as no one could enter without passing my couch, by a very narrow entrance, I was sure to distinguish who or what it was.

I had quitted keeping my eyes upon the woman, and was watching the door, from which I thought I could distinguish voices. I watched still more intensely; but hearing that the sounds came from the other side, I moved my head slowly round, and saw, apparently, the corpse of her son sitting directly opposite to her. The figure was dressed in dead-clothes; that is, it was wrapt in a coarse white sheet, and had a napkin of the same colour round its head. This was raised up on the brow, as if thrust up recently with the hand, discovering the pale steadfast features, that neither moved eye-lid nor lip, though it spoke in an audible voice again and again. The face was not only pale, but there was a clear glazed whiteness upon it, on which the rays of the lamp falling, shewed a sight that could not be looked on without horror. The winding-sheet fell likewise aside at the knee, and I saw the bare feet and legs of the same bleached hue. The old woman's arms was stretched out towards the figure, and her face thrown upwards, the features meanwhile distorted as with ecstatic agony. My senses now became so bewildered, that I fell into a stupor, like a trance, without being able to move either hand or foot. I know not how long the apparition staid; for the next thing that I remember was being reluctantly wakened from my trance by a feeble cry, which I

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heard through my slumber repeated several times. I looked, and saw that the old miserable creature had fallen on her face, and was grasping, in feeble convulsions, the seat where the figure of her dead son had so lately reclined. My compassion overcame my terror; for she seemed on the last verge of life, or rather sliding helplessly from time's slippery precipice, after the thread of existence by which she hung had given way. I lifted her up, and found that all her sufferings were over—the joints were grown supple, and the cold damps of death had settled on her hands and brow. I carried her to the bed from which I had risen, and could scarcely believe that I carried a human body—it being not much heavier than a suit of clothes. After I had laid her down, I brought the lamp near, to see if there was any hope of renovation—she was living, but that was all, and with a resigned though ghastly smile, and a shaking of the head, she expired.

I did not know what to do; for the night was dark as pitch; and I wist not where to fly, knowing the cot to be surrounded by precipitous shores, torrents, and winding bays of the sea; therefore all chance of escape, until day-light, was utterly impossible; so I resolved to trim the lamp, and keep my place, hoping it would not be long till day.

I suppose that I sat about an hour in this dismal place, without moving or changing my attitude, with my brow leaning upon both my hands, and my eyes shut; when I was aroused by hearing a rustling in the bed where the body lay. On looking round, I perceived with horror that the corpse was sitting upright in the bed, shaking its head as it did in the agonies of death, and stretching out its hands towards the hearth. I thought the woman had been vivified, and looked steadily at the face; but I saw that it was the face of a corpse still; for the eye was white, being turned upward and fixed in the socket, the mouth was open, and all the other features immoveably fixed for ever. Seeing that it continued the same

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motion, I lifted the lamp, and looked fearfully round, and there beheld the figure I had so recently seen, sitting on the same seat, in the same attitude, only having its face turned toward the bed.

I could stand this no longer, but fled stumbling out at the door, and ran straight forward. I soon found myself in the sea, and it being ebb tide, I fled along the shore like a deer pursued by the hounds. It was not long till the beach terminated, and I came to an abrupt precipice, washed by the sea. I climbed over a ridge on my hands and knees, and found that I was on a rocky point between two narrow friths, and farther progress impracticable.

I had now no choice left me; so, wrapping myself in my cloak, I threw me down in a bush of heath, below an overhanging cliff, and gave up my whole mind to amazement at what I had witnessed. Astonished as I was, nature yielded to fatigue, and I fell into a sound sleep, from which I did not awake till about the rising of the sun. The scene all around me was frightfully wild and rugged, and I scarce could persuade myself that I was awake, thinking that I was still struggling with a dreadful dream. One would think this was a matter easily settled, but I remember well, it was not so with me that morning. I pulled heath, cut some parts of it off, and chewed them in my mouth;—rose,—walked about, and threw stones in the sea, and still had strong suspicions that I was in a dream. The adventures of the preceding night dawned on my recollection one by one, but these I regarded all as a dream for certain; and it may well be deemed not a little extraordinary, that to this day, if my oath were taken, I declare I could not tell whether I saw these things in a dream, or in reality. My own belief leaned to the former, but every circumstance rather tended to confirm the latter; else, how came I to be in the place where I was.

I scrambled up among the rocks to the westward, and at length came to a small footpath which led from the head of

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the one bay to the other; and following that, it soon brought me to a straggling hamlet, called, I think, Battaline. Here I found a man that had been a soldier, and had a little broken English, and by his help I raised the inhabitants of the village; and, getting into a fishing-boat, we were soon at the cottage. There we found the body lying stretched, cold and stiff, exactly in the very place and the very position in which I laid it at first on the bed. The house was searched, and grievous to relate, there was no article either of meat, drink, or clothing in it, save the old mantle which I found her mending the evening before. It appeared to me on reflection, that it had been a settled matter between her and the spirit, that she was to yield up her frail life that night, and join his company; and that I had found her preparing for her change. The cloak she had meant for her winding-sheet, having nothing else; and by her little hymns and orgies she had been endeavouring to prepare her soul for the company among whom she knew she was so soon to be. There was a tint of spiritual sublimity in the whole matter.

I have related this story exactly as I remember it. It is possible that the whole might have been a dream, and that I had walked off in my sleep; for I have sometimes been subjected to such vagaries, and have played wonderful pranks in my sleep; but I think the circumstance of the corpse being found in the very way in which I had laid it, or at least, supposed I had laid it, confirms it almost beyond a doubt, that I had looked upon the whole with my natural eyes. Or, perhaps part of it may have been real, and part of it a dream, for the whole, from the first, was so like a vision to me, that I can affirm nothing anent it.

The next adventure that happened me on my way through the Highlands, was one of a very opposite nature; but as it bore some affinity with sleep-walking, I shall relate it here, for I put no common-place occurrences in these memoirs.

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On my way from the upper parts of the country of Loch-Carron, to Strath-Glass in Inverness-shire, I was overtaken by a deluge of rain, which flooded the rivers to such a degree, that the smallest burn was almost impassable. At length I came to a point, at the junction of two rivers, that were roaring like the sea, and to proceed a step further was impossible. I had seen no human habitation for several miles, and knew not what I was to do; but perceiving a small footpath that led into the wood, I followed it, and in an instant came to a neat Highland cottage. I went in, and found an elderly decent-looking woman at work, together with a plump blowzy red-haired maiden, whom I supposed to be her daughter. These were the only inhabitants; they could not speak a word of English; but they rose up, set a seat for me, pulled off my wet stockings, and received me with great kindness, heaping, from time to time, fir-wood on the fire to dry my clothes. They likewise gave me plenty of goat-whey, with coarse bread and cheese to eat, and I never in my life saw two creatures so kind and attentive.

When night came, I saw them making up the only bed in the house with clean blankets, and conceived that they were going to favour me with it for that night, and sit up themselves; accordingly, after getting a sign from the good woman, I threw off my clothes, and lay down. I perceived them next hanging my clothes round the fire to dry; and the bed being clean and comfortable, I stretched myself in the middle of it, and fell sound asleep. I had not long enjoyed my sweet repose, before I was awaked by the maid, who said something to me in Gaelic, bidding me, I suppose, lie farther back, and with the greatest unconcern stretched herself down beside me. "Upon my word," thinks I to myself, "this is carrying kindness to a degree of which I had no conception in the world! This is a degree of easy familiarity, that I never experienced from strangers before!" I was mightily pleased with the sim-

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plicity and kind-heartedness of the people, but not so with what immediately followed. There was a torch burning on a shelf at our bed feet, and I wondered that the women viewed the matter with so little concern, for they appeared both uncommonly decent industrious people; yet I thought I spied a designing roguish look in the face of the old woman, who now likewise came into the bed, and lay down at the stock. I was not mistaken; for before she extinguished her torch, she stretched her arm over me, and taking hold of a broad plank that stood up against the back of the bed, and ran on hinges (a thing that I had never noticed before), she brought it down across our bodies, and there being a spring lock on the end of it, she snapt it into the stock, and locked us all three close down to our places till the morning. I tried to compromise matters otherwise, but they only laughed at the predicament of the Sassenach; and the thing was so novel and acute, I was obliged to join in the laugh with all my heart. I was effectually prevented from walking in my sleep for that night, and really felt a great deal of inconveniency in this mode of lying, nevertheless I slept very sound, having been much fatigued the day before. On taking leave of my kind entertainers, after much pressing, I prevailed on the old woman to accept of a crown-piece, but the maid positively refused a present of any kind. When we parted, she gave me her hand, and, with the slyest smile I ever beheld, said something to me about the invidious dale; I did not know what it was, but it made her mother laugh immoderately.

On my arrival at Inverness, I made inquiries concerning Mackay the cooper, and, learning that he was still alive, I made the boy at the inn point him out to me. He was a fine looking old Highlander, but in wretched circumstances with regard to apparel; I did not choose to bring him into the house where I lodged, but, watching an opportunity, I followed him into a lowly change-house, and found him sitting in a cor-

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ner, without having called for any thing to drink, and the manner in which his hostess addressed him, bespoke plainly enough how little he was welcome. I called for a pot of whisky, and began to inquire at all about me of the roads that led to the Lowlands, and, among other places, for the country of the Grants. Here old Mackay spoke up; "If she'll pe after te troving, she'll find te petterest bhaists in Sutherland, and te petterest shentlemans in te whole worlts to pe selling tem from." Thus trying to forward the interest of his clan and chief, of which a Highlander never loses sight for a moment, be his circumstances what they will. But the hostess, who, during this address, had been standing in the middle of the floor with a wooden ladle in her hand, looking sternly and derisively at the speaker, here interposed. "Petter cattles in Sutherland tan Strath-spey, cooper? Fat's te man saying? One of Shemish More Grant's cows wad pe taking in one of Lord Reay's cromachs into within its pody in te inside. And wha will pe saying tat te Mackays are te petterest shentlemans of te Grants in tis house? Wha wad misca' a Gordon on te raws o' Strathbogie? Wha wad come into te Grant's Arms Tavern and Hottle, to tell te Grant's own coosin tat te Mackay's pe te petter shentlemans? Te Mackays forseeth! An te stock shoult pe all like the sample she'll see a fine country of shentlemans forseeth! Tat will eat her neighbour's mhaits and trink him's trinks, an' teil a pawpee to sheathe in him's tanks." The cooper, whose old gray eye had begun to kindle at this speech, shrunk from the last sentence. It was rather hitting him on the sore heel. And moreover, the hostess of the Grant's Arms Tavern and Hotel was brandishing her wooden ladle in a way that gave him but little encouragement to proceed with his argument, so he only turned the quid furiously in his mouth; and, keeping his gray malignant eye fixed on the lady of the hotel, uttered a kind of low "humph." It was far more pro-

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voking that any language he could have uttered. "Fat te deil man, will she pe sitting grumphing like a sow at a porn laty in her own house? Get out of my apodes you auld trunken plackgards;" said the termagant hostess of the Grant's Arms, and so saying, she applied her wooden ladle to the cooper's head and shoulders with very little ceremony. He answered in Gaelic, his native tongue, and was going to make good his retreat, when I desired the hostess to let him remain, as I wished to make some inquiries at him about the country. When he heard that, he ran by her, cowering down his head as if expecting another hearty thwack as he passed, and placed himself up between my chair and the wall. I asked him if he would take share of my beverage, and at the same time handed him a queich filled with good Ferintosh. "And py her faith man and tat she will!—Coot health, sir," said he, with hurried impatience, and drank it off; then, fixing his eyes on me, that swam in tears of grateful delight, he added, "Cot pless you, man! Ter has not te like of tat gone up her troat for mony a plessed tay." "Aye," said the hostess, "te heat of some's troat has gart teir pottoms kiss te cassick." The cooper eyed her with apparent jealousy; but, desirous to keep his station, he only said. "She never was peen sawing Mrs Grant tis way pefore, but her worst wort pe always coming out te first, and she's a coot kint laty after all, and an honest laty too, sir, and she has often peen tooing coot to me and mine."

I conversed for some time with him about general matters, always handing him a little whisky between, which he drank heartily, and soon began to get into high spirits. I then inquired his name, and having heard it, I pretended to ruminate, repeating the name and occupation to myself for some time, and at length asked if he never had a daughter called Clifford? The old man stared at me as if his eyes would rend their sockets, and his head trembled as if some paralytic affec-

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tion had seized him; but, seeing that I still waited for an answer, he held down his head, and said, with a deep sigh, "Och! and inteed, and inteed she had!" I asked if he knew that she was still living, or what had become of her? But before he answered this question, with true Highland caution he asked me, "Fat do you ken of my poor misfortunate pairn?" I said I had met with her once, in a country far away, and requested that he would tell me what kind of a girl she had been in her youth, and why she left her native country. The old man was deeply affected, much more than I could have expected one of his dissipated habits to be, and he answered me thus, while the tears were dropping from his eyes: "Alas, alas! my Cliffy was a fary tear pairn; a fary plessed cood disposed pairn as ever were peing porn; but she lost its moter, and ten she pe ill guidit, and worse advised."

I weet weel, master, te cooper Mackay says right for eence;" said the lady of the Grant's Arms, "for never was ter ane waur eesed breed in nae kintry tan puir Cliffy. De ye ken, sir, I hae seen tat auld trunken teek sitting at te fisky a' te neeght, and te peer lassick at heme wi' neither coal nor candle, nor meat nor trink; and gaun climp climping about on te cassick without either stockings or sheen. She was peing a kind affectionfee pairn to him, but was eesed waur tan a peest. Mony's the time and aft tat I hae said, 'Cliffy Mackay will either mak a speen or spill a guid horn,'—and sae it turned out, for she was ponny, and left til hersel. But the vagabons that misleedit her has leeved to repent it—pless my heart, I wonder how he can look i' te auld cooper's face! Heaven's ay jeest and rightees, and has paid him heme for traducing ony puir man's pairn—Cot pe wi' us, sir, he's gaun abeet tis town, ye wad pe wae to see him—he gangs twafauld o'er a steeck, and I widnee gie him credit de ye ken for a pot of fisky.—Cot's preath gin tere pe not he jeest coming in; speak o' te teil and he'll appear."

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This speech of the lady's of the burning Mountain had almost petrified me, which need not be wondered at, considering how much I was involved in all to which it alluded; but I had not time either to make farther inquiries or observations, ere the identical Lieutenant Colin Frazer entered our hall, (the only tenable apartment that the Grant's Arms Tavern and Hotel contained), in a woful plight indeed. He was emaciated to skin and bone, and walked quite double, leaning on a staff. Never shall I forget his confounded and mortified looks, when he saw the father of Clifford Mackay and me sitting in close conference together at the side of the fire. He looked as if he would have dropped down, and his very lips turned to a livid whiteness. He had not a word to utter, and none of us spoke to him; but at last our hostess somewhat relieved his embarrassment by saying, "Guide'en, guide'en til ye, captain Frazer." "Coote'en Mustress Grhaunt, coote'en. She pe fary could tay tat. Any nhews Mustress Grhaunt? She pe fary could tay; fary could inteed. Hoh oh oh oh—pooh pooh pooh pooh." And so saying, he left the Grant's Arms faster than he entered.

"Cot bless my heart, fat ails te man?" cried our hostess, "he looks as gin he had seen te ghaist o' his grandmither. Is it te auld cooper's face tat he's sae freihgit for? Ten his kinscience is beguid to barm at last. Teil tat it birst te white middrit o' him."

The cooper now eagerly took up the conversation where we had left off, and inquired about his lost child; and when I told him that she was well, and happy, and married to a rich man that doted on her; that she was the mother of a fine boy, and lived in better style than any lady in Inverness, he seized my hand, and, pressing it between his, wet it with a flood of tears; showering all the while his blessings on me, on his Cliffy, her husband, and child promiscuously. I was greatly affected; for, to say the truth, I had felt, ever since we

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parted, a hankering affection for Clifford, such as I never had for any human being but herself; yet so inconsistent were all my feelings, that the impression she made on my heart, when I did not know who she was, still remained uppermost, keeping all the intimacy and endearments that had passed between us in the shade; and I found myself deeply interested in the old drunken cooper on her account. Being likewise wrought up by the Highland whisky to high and generous sentiments, I made the cooper a present of ten guineas in his daughter's name, assuring him, at the same time, that I would see the same sum paid to him every year.

The lady of the burning Mountain now bustled about, and fearing that the cooper "wadnee hae been birsten wi' his meltith," as she termed it, made him a bowl of wretched tea, and her whole behaviour to him underwent a radical change. I rather repented of this donation; for my finances could but ill afford it; and I dreaded that the lady of the Grant's Arms Tavern and Hotel would soon get it all. However, I did not think of keeping my word with regard to the succeeding years.

It was the middle of winter when I arrived in Edinburgh; and, owing to the fatigue I had undergone, I was affected with a scorbutic complaint, and my wounds became very troublesome. This had the effect of getting me established on the half pay list, and I remained totally idle in Edinburgh for the space of three years. During that time I courted and dangled after seventeen different ladies, that had, or at least were reported to have, large fortunes; for the greater part of such fortunes amount to nothing more than a report. I was at one time paying my addresses to four, with all the ardour I was master of; however, I did not get any of them; and living became very hard, so that I was often driven to my last shift for a dinner, and to keep appearances somewhat fair.

I had my lodgings from a tailor in Nicolson Street, who supplied me with clothes, and with him I soon fell deep in

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debt; but I took care to keep in most cordial terms with his wife, which helped me on a good deal. When my small pay came in, I went and paid up my grocers in part, and thus procured a little credit for another season, till I could find a fair pretence of being called away on some sudden service, and leaving them all in the lurch. Those who imagine that a half-pay officer lives a life of carelessness and ease, are widely mistaken; there is no business that I know of that requires so much dexterity and exertion. Things were coming to a crisis with me, and I saw the time fast approaching when Edinburgh, and Nicolson Street in particular, would be too hot for my residence. The forage, besides, had completely failed, so that there was an absolute necessity for shifting head quarters, but how to accomplish that was the next great concern.

"A wife I must have!" said I to myself, "either with more or less money, else my credit is gone for ever;" and in order to attain this honourable connexion, never did man court with such fervour as I did at this time. My passion of love rose to the highest possible pitch, and I told several ladies, both old and young ones, that it was impossible I could live without them. This was very true, but there's a kind of coldness about the idea of half-pay, that the devil himself cannot warm. They remained unmoved, and took their own way, suffering me to take mine. There was, however, one good thing attending these attacks. Whenever *any* of the besieged were invited to tea, I was sure to be invited too by their gossips; and either with those who invited me, or with such as I conducted home, I generally contrived to *tarry supper*. We are the most useful and convenient of all men for evening parties where not much is going, but worthy citizens seldom choose men of our calibre for their dinner companions.

I was right hard beset now, and at length was obliged to make a great fuss, and tell my landlady that my father was dead, (this was the truth, only he had died four years before,)

and that I was obliged to go to the country to attend the funeral, at which I would require all the ready money I had; but on winding up his affairs I would be enabled to settle every thing; and then embracing the lady of the needle, I bade her adieu for *a few weeks* with much apparent regret.

Straightway I made for my brother's house in Lammer Moor, and resolved to stay there a while at free quarters until my pay ran up; but though my brother was civil, he was no more—he was in easy, but not affluent circumstances, and had a rising family to provide for, and I easily perceived that I was not a very welcome guest. My sister-in-law, in particular, took little pains to conceal her disapprobation, and often let me overhear things not a little mortifying. Nevertheless I kept my ground against every opposition, until found out by my friend, the tailor; who, having learned that I had not been telling his wife the genuine truth, threatened me with a prosecution for the recovery of the sums I owed him. Others followed his example, and there was no more peace for me there.

I returned to Edinburgh as privately as possible, and took lodgings in a place called Carrubber's Close, from which I never emerged during the day, but continued still to attend the evening parties of my friends the old maids, as well as those of jointured widows. There was a Mrs Rae in Argyle Square, with whom I formed a chance acquaintance on my first arrival from America, that had constantly taken an interest in my affairs of gallantry, though I took care not to inform her of one half of them. She was an intolerable gossip—officious in every one's concerns, and particularly fond of match-making; but seemed to enter into my views and character wonderfully well. It was under the patronage of this illustrious dame that I was first introduced to the house of Dr Robertson, a gentleman who had acquired a considerable fortune in the East, and had an only sister, a maiden lady about forty, who lived with him.

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Mrs Rae gave me the exact yearly sum settled by the Doctor on this lady, with the assurance that she was his sole heir; and with this fine prospect, I determined on commencing a matrimonial attack on the dame at once. I did so; and had all the success that the most sanguine lover could desire. By the assistance of Mrs Rae, the matter was brought to bear in the course of one month, during which time I had never seen my destined bride, save two or three times always by candle light. Her appearance was not at all amiss; but there was a cold stupid insensibility in her looks, and in every thing that she said or did, that I disliked exceedingly; and notwithstanding the engagements I had entered into, every time that I saw her I disliked her the more; so that when the day appointed for our nuptials arrived, I was never once thinking of performing these engagements, but laying a plan how to get them broken off; when, behold a simple and natural incident occurred, which determined my choice—a caption of horning was civilly put into my hand by a messenger at arms. I had no other resource, so I went away and gave my hand to the lady, and received hers in return, and we were joined in the holy bands of wedlock to enjoy all the happiness imaginable. I did not much relish the joke, and had almost resolved in my own mind that I would not go to bed with her; but it so chanced, that in endeavouring to keep up my spirits, I became so drunk, that my jovial companions were obliged to undress, and carry me to bed; and I never knew where my head lay, until the next day that I was awakened by the bride rising to leave me. I could not recollect in the world where I was, nor who the beautiful dame was that was dressing at my bedside; and, raising my drumbly head, I uttered some incoherent sentences, to which my helpmate deigned no reply, but "stately strode away."

Matters came to my recollection by degrees, and as a man is always unhappy and irritable after drinking to extremity,

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I cannot describe how degraded and miserable I felt. The first resolution I made, was to cut my throat, and thereby to end all my cares, and griefs, and sorrows at once! and so well pleased was I with the heroic project, that I staggered over the bed to look for some extremely sharp instrument wherewith to put my design in execution. But coming first to a jug of cold water that stood on the basin-stand, I lifted it with unsteady hand. "Here's to you captain, and a pleasant journey," said I whimpering, and drank the beverage almost to the bottom. I then stood hanging my head in deep meditation for some time, always reeling first to the one side and then to the other.

In this space of silent contemplation, it had struck me that drowning would be much better, as well as more handsome and genteel; and besides, instead of experiencing any pain by being thrown into the water, I felt from the heat of my body, that it would be excessively delightful. "Captain," said I to myself, "just consider captain, how it would look—to have all that fine bed—and sheets—and curtains—and carpet—all drenched with blood?—shocking!—shocking!—shocking! The other plan is far preferable!" At this moment, happening to turn round my eyes, I caught a glimpse of myself in a mirror, which made such an impression on me, that it rivetted me to the spot, and the position, for almost a quarter of an hour. Nothing could be so truly grotesque. I shall never forget it. There was I standing with looks of the most stupid inebriety, in an attitude intended for one of mature deliberation; my right fore-finger pressed on the hollow of my left hand, and my head bowed down with a wise cast to one side; my features the while screwed into groups of the most demure and pointed calculation, and all to decide on the superior advantages of drowning to the cutting of one's throat.

In the course of a walk which I took down towards the sea to settle the matter, my blood and spirits again grew calm,

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and after all the reasoning I could make on both sides, it appeared that it was at least as prudent a course that I had taken, as any other of which I had the option; so I determined to be reconciled to my bride, and make an apology.

Well; the Doctor's house being in St James's court, I persuaded my charmer to take a walk with me on the Castle Hill, and as soon as I got her fairly by herself, I began to descant, in general terms, on the indecorous and hateful crime of drunkenness, intending to end it with a humble apology for the mistake I had fallen into, and the insult I had committed: but, to my astonishment, my wife cut me short by a proud disapproving stare, and some most pointed words which I could not comprehend; so I judged it as good to let the matter drop. Now the plain truth of the matter, as I afterwards learned, was this: that on the bridal night my beloved chanced to be fully as much inebriated as I was; but only, having the advantage of me in going earlier to bed, she awakened first; but without knowing of any thing that had passed during the night, either that she had had a drunken bridegroom, or any bridegroom whatsoever by her side.

I had wondered how the Doctor, who seemed a judicious sensible man, had been so willing to part with the lady; and that, without either requiring any settlement on my part, or even deigning to make any inquiry into my circumstances. But it was little wonder that he was glad to get quit of her; for in a few days I found that she was addicted to the drinking of ardent spirits, to a degree that no consideration could control. I went to him and told him of it. He said his sister was far from being a habitual drunkard, but she was subject to a stomach complaint that often induced her to take more spirits than she was the better of—that I had it, however, in my power to restrain her, by carefully locking up every drop of spirits within my door; and this he charged

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me to do punctually, assuring me that she was too much of a lady to drink any where else but in her own house.

I promised that I would; and, going home, I locked up every thing, and put the keys into my desk. Contrary to my expectation, my helpmate made no remonstrance. She had perceived my design, and resolved to be even with me. In the course of two days I missed the key of a closet, in which I had a hogshead of brandy locked up; and the next day again it was put upon the ring with the rest. Suspecting that she had been getting one made, I said nothing about it, but resolved to watch her motions. It was much worse than I expected. Before evening she was in such a state that her old maid servant desired she might not be disturbed, for that she was taken suddenly ill. Of course I kept away from her, and slept by myself; but in spite of all her maid's exertions to restrain her, I heard her at one time raving and speaking the most extravagant nonsense, at another singing, and then again thumping the bed-clothes with her hands, and screaming in convulsions of laughter. Though I liked my glass as well as any man, I could not help abhorring and despising my helpmate now; and, as the best revenge I could get on her, I thought I would humour her, and suffer her to enjoy her glorious discovery. The door of the closet where the brandy was deposited was within two steps of her bed-head, and from the time she became mistress of the secret key, she never left her chamber, but kept herself night and day in a state of delirium. The Doctor, her brother, came to see her, and told me he believed she had been drinking spirits; and, considering the high fever she was in, it was death to her. I said it was impossible; and, taking the keys from my desk, I opened every press and closet in the house where liquors were deposited, not forgetting the closet that contained my wife's hidden treasure. He shook his head, and said he did not know what to make of it.

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From the time that she found herself mistress of this hogshead of brandy she never tasted meat; and grew every day more intent on the spirits, till at the last she grew voraciously mad on them; and not to dwell longer on this disagreeable subject, in three weeks and two days from the commencement of her drinking campaign, she fairly drank herself to death; and thus was I deprived of my wife, and a great part of my cask of brandy beside.

I found myself in a curious situation now. None of my former debts had been discharged; but, my credit having been established by my marriage, they had no more been insisted on. I had never received a farthing of my wife's fortune, save my household furniture, which indeed was costly and elegant. No legal contract had been made, and I found myself little the better of my rich and short-lived connexion. My creditors again began to tease me—I sold part of my furniture, and at length applied to Dr Robertson, by letter, for my wife's personal fortune. He answered me by stating, that since the death of his parents his sister had been solely dependant on him—that he did intend to have settled his whole property on her, and her heirs, had she lived; but that since Heaven had decreed it otherwise, he had no farther concern with me, not being satisfied that I had behaved to his sister exactly as I ought to have done.

I now wished with all my heart that my wife and cask of brandy had been both forthcoming, bad as she was; for here was I again reduced to my miserable half-pay, and all its concomitant evils, shifts, and privations, and was obliged to betake myself to fortune-hunting again, the great business of a half-pay officer's life. I might still have been said to be in my prime, athletic and healthy; and certainly might have thriven in the affections of the fair as well as most heroes of the moiety. But I was in this as in all things else, "unstable as water, and could not excel." I never could stick

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by one, nor two, nor three, nor any given number. I was a general lover, and as general a wooer; and if I might be allowed to judge from appearances, which no man ought to do, even on deciding on the quality of an oyster, I was rather a general favourite. The benevolent old maids brightened up at my approach, and the bouncing widows adjusted their kerchiefs and cockernonies, taking care that I should not miss seeing their beautifully turned arms, feet, and ancles, and left the rest to providence.—The blooming maids curtsied and blushed, and every thing looked well. But after all, I found that the ladies uniformly view a half-pay officer in the same light with a tailor; and, let them reason as they will, they look on him only as half a man; while all the time these very excellent fellows think of nothing else, and talk of nothing else, save their fair ingrates, and the amount of their fortunes.

It is highly absurd in ladies, if they want a husband, to be shy with a half-pay officer. I have known many of them, who would have been very glad to have had such and such ladies, and I knew well that these would as gladly have had them; yet these same ladies stood out, and grew gray in the service, and died as they had lived, in sincere repentance. They need never think that the sons of the moisty care a farthing for their persons, or have any leisure for constancy, or the most distant thoughts of such a thing; and as it is always a creditable match for a jointured widow or old maid, there is nothing like striking while the iron is hot with such men. But should the ladies presume to differ from one who has had so much experience, and pretend that they do not think such husbands would be a credit to them, I would answer, that they are surely more creditable than none. If ever a soldier is seen dangling after what he denominates a "d—d fine woman," who has no fortune, be sure it is for any other purpose than marriage. It is indeed mostly with the mar-

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ried women that are beautiful that they carry on their amours, that no such idea as that of marriage may have the chance of being entertained, and with the rich and ugly that their matrimonial connexions usually succeed. As I speak from hard experience, and confess all my necessities freely, none of my *half* brethren can possibly take it amiss.

For the space of two years my exertions continued without any abatement, and with as little success, but without a single adventure that is worth recording. I often dressed in full uniform, and went round to all my sweethearts in one day, protesting my violent attachment to each of them, and begging permission to ask them of their friends or guardians; but owing to the absurd customs among the fair, and the equivocal answers they gave me, the day of bliss was always postponed, though "it was a consummation devoutly to be wished."

I saw that there would be no end of all my labours; and, owing to my thriftless and liberal manner of living, my difficulties increased to a degree that could no longer be withstood.

I therefore was obliged to apply once more to my old friend, Mrs Rae, notwithstanding the manner in which she had nooseed me before. She had one in her eye ready for me; a rich widow, and a worthy excellent woman, rather well looked—so she described her; and shortly after I was introduced. Instead of finding her well looked, she was so ugly I could scarcely bear to look at her. She had gray eyes, shrivelled cheeks, a red nose, and a considerable beard; but every thing about the house had the appearance of plenty, cleanliness, and comfort; matters that weighed mightily with one in my situation; so I was obliged to ask her in marriage, and by the help of Mrs Rae, soon overcame all scruples on the part of my fair lady of the mustachio, who seemed quite overjoyed at the prospect of getting such a husband. Our interviews of love were ludicrous beyond any scene ever witnessed. Had any

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one seen how she ogled, he would have split his sides with laughter. Her thin lips were squeezed into a languishing smile, her gray eyes softly and squintingly turned on me, and the hairs of her beard moved with a kind of muscular motion like the whiskers of a cat. Though my stomach was like to turn at this display of the tender passion, I was obliged to ogle again, and press her to name a day, whereon I was to be made the happiest of men?

Oh! captain, captain; you are a kind, dear, delightful man!" exclaimed she, "you have stole away my tender heart, and I can no longer *forestand* your *opportunities*. Well then, since you will have it so, let it be at Christmas, when the days are short. Oh! captain!" and saying so, she squeezed my hand in both hers, and lifted up her voice and wept.

The thing that pleased me best in this interview was the receipt of £100 from my now affianced bride to prepare for the wedding, which relieved me a good deal; so that when Christmas came, I was in no hurry for the marriage, but contrived to put it off from day to day. I had a strong impression on my mind that the event was never to happen, though I could divine nothing that was likely to prevent it; but so confident was I of this, that I went on fearlessly till the very last day of my liberty. I had that day, after sitting two hours over my breakfast, thrown myself into an easy chair in a fit of despondence, and was ruminating on all the chequered scenes of my past life, and what was likely to be my future fate with this my whiskered spouse. "Pity me! O ye powers of love, pity me!" I exclaimed, and stretched myself back in one of those silent agonies which regret will sometimes shed over the most careless and dissipated mind. I saw I was going to place myself in a situation in which I would drag out an existence, without having one person in the world that cared for me, or one that I loved and could be kind to. The prospect of such a life of selfishness and insignificance my heart could not

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brook; and never in my life did I experience such bitterness of heart.

While leaning in this languid and sorrowful guise, and just when my grief was at the height, I heard a rap at the door. It was too gentle and timid to be that of a bailiff or creditor, and therefore I took it to be a (still more unwelcome) messenger of love, or perhaps the dame of the mustachio and malmsey nose herself. I strained my organs of hearing to catch the sounds of her disagreeable voice—I heard it—that is, I heard a female voice on the landing-place, and I knew it could be no other; and, though I had pledged myself to lead my life with her, my blood revolted from this one private interview, and I sat up in my seat half enraged. The servant opened the door in the quick abrupt manner in which these impertinent rascals always do it. "A lady wishes to speak with you, sir." "Cannot you show her in then, and be d—d to you?" He did so; and there entered—Oh Heaven! not my disastrous dame, but the most lovely, angelic, and splendid creature I had ever seen, who was leading by the hand a comely boy about seven years of age, dressed like a prince. My eyes were dazzled, and my senses so wholly confounded, that I could not speak a word; but, rising from my seat, I made her a low respectful bow. This she did not deign to return, but, coming slowly up to me, and looking me full in the face, she stretched out her beautiful hand. "So then I have found you out at last," said she, taking my unresisting hand in hers. It was Clifford Mackay. "My dear Clifford! My angel, my preserver," said I, "Is it you?" and taking her in my arms, I placed her on my knees in the easy chair, and kissed her lips, her cheek, and chin, a thousand times in raptures of the most heartfelt delight, till even the little boy, her only son, wept with joy at seeing our happiness. Her husband had died, and left this her only son heir to all his wealth, the interest of which was solely at her disposal as long as her son was a minor, for the

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purpose of his education; and when he became of age she was to have £100 a year as long as she lived. As soon as she found herself in these circumstances, she determined to find me out, and share it with me, to whatever part of the world I had retired, and in whatever condition of life she found me, whether married or unmarried. With this intent, she told the other guardians of her son's property, that she intended going into Scotland, to live for a time with her relations in that country, and to overlook the education of her son, whom she was going to place at the seminaries there. They approved highly of the plan, and furnished her with every means of carrying it into execution; and she having once got a letter from me dated from Edinburgh, as from her brother, she came straight thither, and heard of me at once by applying at the office of the army agent.

I told her of my engagement, and of my determination to break it off, and make her my lawful wife; and she in return acknowledged frankly, that such a connexion was what of all things in the world she most wished, if I could do so with honour; but she added, that were I married a thousand times it could not diminish her interest in me one whit. I assured her there was no fear of getting free of my beloved, and sitting down I wrote a letter to her, stating the impossibility of my fulfilling my engagements with her, as the wife of my youth, whom I had lost among the savages of America more than seven years ago, and had long given up all hopes of ever seeing again, had found her way to this country with my child, to claim her rights, which my conscience would not suffer me to deny; and that she had arrived at my house, and was at that very time sitting with me at the same table.

This intelligence put my gentle bride quite beside herself; for the short days, and long wearisome nights of Christmas had already arrived, and she found that her prospects as well as mine were entirely changed. She wept, raved, tore her

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hair, and abused me—threatened me with a prosecution, and then fell into hysterics. She was soon after married to a brave old veteran, who had lost a limb, and seen many misfortunes; a match that was brought about by the indefatigable Mrs Rae, and for any thing that I ever heard turned out well enough.

Clifford and I were regularly married, and have now lived together eighteen years as man and wife, and I have always found her a kind, faithful, and good-natured companion. It is true we have lived rather a dissipated, confused, irregular sort of life, such as might have been expected from the nature of our first connexion; but this has been wholly owing to my acquired habits, and not to any bias in her disposition towards such a life. She never controlled me in any one thing; and her mind was so soft and gentle, that it was like melted wax, and took the impression at once of the company with which it associated. We lived in affluence till the time that her son became of age, but since that period we feel a good deal of privation, although our wants are mostly artificial; and I believe I have loved her better than I could have loved any other, and as well as my unstaid mind was capable of loving any one.

These last eighteen years of my life have been so regular, or rather so uniformly irregular, that the shortest memorandum of them that I could draw up, would be flat and unprofitable. There has been nothing varied in them—nothing animating; and I am wearing down to the grave, sensible of having spent a long life of insignificance, productive of no rational happiness to myself, nor benefit to my fellow-creatures. From these reflections have I been induced to write out this memoir. The exercise has served to amuse me, and may be a source of amusement as well as instruction to others. From the whole of the narrative, these moral axioms may be drawn: That without steadiness in a profession, success in life need not be

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expected; and without steadiness of principle, we forego our happiness both here and hereafter. It may be deemed by some, that I have treated female imprudence with too great a degree of levity, and represented it as producible of consequences that it does not deserve; but in this, I am only blameable in having adhered to the simple truth. Besides, I would gladly combat the ungenerous and cruel belief, that when a female once steps aside from the paths of rectitude, she is lost for ever. Nothing can be more ungracious than this; yet to act conformably with such a sentiment, is common in the manners of this volatile age, as notorious for its laxity of morals as for its false delicacy. Never yet was there a *young* female seduced from the paths of virtue, who did not grievously repent, and who would not gladly have returned, had an opportunity offered, or had even a possibility been left. How cruel then to shut the only door, on the regaining of which the eternal happiness or misery of a fellow-creature depends. I have known many who were timeously snatched from error, before their *minds* were corrupted, which is not the work of a day; and who turned out characters more exemplary for virtue and every good quality, than in all likelihood they would have been, had no such misfortune befallen them.

"The rainbow's lovely in the eastern cloud,
The rose is beauteous on the bended thorn;
Sweet is the evening ray from purple shroud,
And sweet the orient blushes of the morn;
Sweeter than all the beauties which adorn
The female form in youth and maiden bloom!
Oh! why should passion ever man suborn
To work the sweetest flower of nature's doom,
And cast o'er all her joys a veil of cheerless gloom!
"Oh fragile flower! that blossoms but to fade!—
One slip recovery or recall defies!—
Thou walk'st the dizzy verge with steps unstaid,
Fair as the habitants of yonder skies!

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Like them thou fallest never more to rise!
Oh fragile flower! for thee my heart's in pain!—
Haply a world is hid from mortal eyes,
Where thou may'st smile in purity again,
And shine in virgin bloom that ever shall remain."

ADAM BELL.

THIS tale, which may be depended on as in every part true, is singular, for the circumstance of its being insolvable either from the facts that have been discovered relating to it, or by reason: for though events sometimes occur among mankind, which at the time seem inexplicable, yet, there being always some individuals acquainted with the primary causes of those events, they seldom fail of being brought to light before all the actors in them, or their confidants, are removed from this state of existence. But the causes which produced the events here related, have never been accounted for in this world; even conjecture is left to wander in a labyrinth, unable to get hold of the thread that leads to the catastrophe.

Mr Bell was a gentleman of Annandale, in Dumfries-shire, in the south of Scotland, the proprietor of a considerable estate in that district, part of which he occupied himself. He lost his father when he was an infant, and his mother dying when he was about 20 years of age, left him the sole proprietor of the estate, besides a large sum of money at interest, for which he was indebted, in a great measure, to his mother's parsimony during his minority. His person was tall, comely, and athletic, and his whole delight was in warlike and violent exercises. He was the best horseman and marksman in the county, and valued himself particularly upon his skill in the broad sword exercise. Of this he often boasted aloud, and

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regretted that there was not one in the country whose prowess was in some degree equal to his own.

In the autumn of 1745, after being for several days busily and silently employed in preparing for his journey, he left his own house and went for Edinburgh, giving, at the same time, such directions to his servants, as indicated his intention of being absent for some time.

A few days after he had left his home, in the morning, while his house-keeper was putting the house in order for the day, her master, as she thought, entered by the kitchen door, the other being bolted, and passed her in the middle of the floor. He was buttoned in his great coat, which was the same he had on when he went from home; he likewise had the same hat on his head, and the same whip in his hand, which he took with him. At sight of him she uttered a shriek, but recovering her surprise, instantly said to him, "You have not staid so long from us, Sir." He made no reply, but went sullenly into his own room, without throwing off his great coat. After a pause of about five minutes, she followed him into the room—he was standing at his desk with his back towards her—she asked him if he wished to have a fire kindled? and afterwards if he was well enough? but he still made no reply to any of these questions. She was astonished, and returned into the kitchen. After tarrying about other five minutes, he went out at the front door, it being then open, and walked deliberately towards the bank of the river Kinnel, which was deep and wooded, and in that he vanished from her sight. The woman ran out in the utmost consternation to acquaint the men who were servants belonging to the house; and coming to one of the ploughmen, she told him that their master was come home, and had certainly lost his reason, for that he was wandering about the house and would not speak. The man loosed his horses from the plough and came home, listened to the woman's relation, made her repeat it again and again,

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and then assured her that she was raving, for their master's horse was not in the stable, and of course he could not be come home.—However, as she persisted in her asseveration with every appearance of sincerity, he went into the linn to see what was become of his mysterious master. He was neither to be seen nor heard of in all the country!—It was then concluded that the house-keeper had seen an apparition, and that something had befallen their master; but on consulting with some old people, skilled in those matters, they learned, that when a *wraith*, or apparition of a living person appeared while the sun was up, instead of being a prelude of instant death, it prognosticated very long life: and, moreover, that it could not possibly be a ghost that she had seen, for they always chose the night season for making their visits. In short, though it was the general topic of conversation among the servants, and the people in their vicinity, no reasonable conclusion could be formed on the subject.

The most probable conjecture was, that as Mr Bell was known to be so fond of arms, and had left his home on the very day that prince Charles Stuart and his Highlanders defeated General Hawley on Falkirk moor, he had gone either with him or the Duke of Cumberland to the north. It was, however, afterwards ascertained, that he had never joined any of the armies. Week came after week, and month after month, but no word of Mr Bell. A female cousin was his nearest living relation; her husband took the management of his affairs; and, concluding that he had either joined the army, or drowned himself in the Kinnel, when he was seen go into the linn, made no more inquiries after him.

About this very time, a respectable farmer, whose surname was M'Millan, and who resided in the neighbourhood of Musselburgh, happened to be in Edinburgh about some business. In the evening he called upon a friend, who lived near Holyrood-house; and being seized with an indisposition, they per-

suaded him to tarry with them all night. About the middle of the night he grew exceedingly ill, and not being able to find any rest or ease in his bed, imagined he would be the better of a walk. He put on his clothes, and that he might not disturb the family, slipped quietly out at the back door, and walked in St Anthony's garden behind the house. The moon shone so bright, that it was almost as light as noonday, and he had scarcely taken a single turn, until he saw a tall man enter from the other side, buttoned in a drab-coloured great coat. It so happened, that at that time M'Millan stood in the shadow of the wall, and perceiving that the stranger did not observe him, a thought struck him that it would not be amiss to keep himself concealed; that he might see what the man was going to be about. He walked backwards and forwards for some time in apparent impatience, looking at his watch every minute, until at length another man came in by the same way, buttoned likewise in a great coat, and having a bonnet on his head. He was remarkably stout made, but considerably lower in stature than the other. They exchanged only a single word; then turning both about, they threw off their great coats, drew their swords, and began a most desperate and well contested combat.

The tall gentleman appeared to have the advantage. He constantly gained ground on the other, and drove him half round the division of the garden in which they fought. Each of them strove to fight with his back towards the moon, so that she might shine full in the face of his opponent; and many rapid wheels were made for the purpose of gaining this position. The engagement was long and obstinate, and by the desperate thrusts that were frequently aimed on both sides, it was evident that they meant one another's destruction. They came at length within a few yards of the place where M'Millan still stood concealed. They were both out of breath, and at that instant a small cloud chancing to over-shadow

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the moon, one of them called out, "Hold, we can't see."—They uncovered their heads—wiped their faces—and as soon as the moon emerged from the cloud, each resumed his guard. Surely that was an awful pause! and short, indeed, was the stage between it and eternity with the one! The tall gentleman made a lounge at the other, who parried and returned it; and as the former sprung back to avoid the thrust, his foot slipped, and he stumbled forward towards his antagonist, who dexterously met his breast in the fall with the point of his sword, and ran him through the body. He made only one feeble convulsive struggle, as if attempting to rise, and expired almost instantaneously.

M'Millan was petrified with horror; but conceiving himself to be in a perilous situation, having stolen out of the house at that dead hour of the night; he had so much presence of mind as to hold his peace, and to keep from interfering in the smallest degree.

The surviving combatant wiped his sword with great composure;—put on his bonnet—covered the body with one of the great coats—took up the other, and departed; M'Millan returned quietly to his chamber without awakening any of the family. His pains were gone; but his mind was shocked and exceedingly perturbed; and after deliberating until morning, he determined to say nothing of the matter; and to make no living creature acquainted with what he had seen; thinking that suspicion would infallibly rest on him. Accordingly he kept his bed next morning until his friend brought him the tidings, that a gentleman had been murdered at the back of the house during the night. He then arose and examined the body, which was that of a young man; seemingly from the country, having brown hair, and fine manly features. He had neither letter, book, nor signature of any kind about him, that could in the least lead to a discovery of who he was; only a common silver watch was found in his pocket, and an ele-

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gant sword was clasped in his cold bloody hand, which had an A. and B. engraved on the hilt. The sword had entered at his breast, and gone out at his back a little below the left shoulder. He had likewise received a slight wound on the sword arm.

The body was carried to the dead-room, where it lay for eight days, and though great numbers inspected it, yet none knew who, or whence the deceased was, and he was at length buried among the strangers in the Grayfriars Churchyard.

Sixteen years elapsed before M'Millan once mentioned the circumstance of his having seen the duel, to any person; but, at that period, being in Annandale receiving some sheep that he had bought, and chancing to hear of the astonishing circumstances of Bell's disappearance, he divulged the whole.—The time, the description of his person, his clothes, and above all, the sword with the initials of his name engraven upon it, confirmed the fact beyond the smallest shadow of doubt, that it was Mr Bell whom he had seen killed in the duel behind the Abbey. But who the person was that slew him, how the quarrel commenced, or who it was that appeared to his house-keeper, remains to this day a profound secret, and is likely to remain so, until that day when every deed of darkness shall be brought to light.

Some have even ventured to blame M'Millan for the whole, on account of his long concealment of facts; and likewise in consideration of his uncommon bodily strength, and daring disposition, he being one of the boldest and most enterprising men of the age in which he lived; but all who knew him despised such insinuations, and declared them to be entirely inconsistent with his character, which was most honourable and disinterested; and besides, his tale has every appearance of truth, "Pluris est oculatus testis unus quam auriti decem."

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DUNCAN CAMPBELL.

Duncan Campbell came from the Highlands, when six years of age, to live with an old maiden aunt in Edinburgh, and attend the school. His mother was dead; but his father had supplied her place, by marrying his housekeeper. Duncan did not trouble himself about these matters, nor indeed about any other matters, save a black foal of his father's, and a large sagacious colley, named Oscar, which belonged to one of the shepherds. There being no other boy save Duncan about the house, Oscar and he were constant companions,—with his garter tied round Oscar's neck, and a piece of deal tied to his big bushy tail, Duncan would often lead him about the green, pleased with the idea that he was conducting a horse and cart. Oscar submitted to all this with great cheerfulness, but whenever Duncan mounted to ride on him, he found means instantly to unhorse him, either by galloping, or rolling himself on the green. When Duncan threatened him, he looked submissive and licked his face and hands; when he corrected him with the whip, he cowered at his feet;—matters were soon made up. Oscar would lodge no where during the night but at the door of the room where his young friend slept, and wo be to the man or woman who ventured to enter it at untimely hours.

When Duncan left his native home he thought not of his father, nor any of the servants. He was fond of the ride, and some supposed that he even scarcely thought of the black foal; but when he saw Oscar standing looking him ruefully in the face, the tears immediately blinded both his eyes. He caught him around the neck, hugged and kissed him,—"Good-

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b'ye Oscar," said he blubbering;—"good-b'ye, God bless you, my dear Oscar;" Duncan mounted before a servant, and rode away—Oscar still followed at a distance, until he reached the top of the hill—he then sat down and howled;—Duncan cried till his little heart was like to burst.—"What ails you?" said the servant. "I will never see my poor honest Oscar again," said Duncan, "an' my heart canna bide it."

Duncan staid a year in Edinburgh, but he did not make great progress in learning. He did not approve highly of attending the school, and his aunt was too indulgent to compel his attendance. She grew extremely ill one day—the maids kept constantly by her, and never regarded Duncan. He was an additional charge to them, and they never loved him, but used him harshly. It was now with great difficulty that he could obtain either meat or drink. In a few days after his aunt was taken ill she died. All was in confusion, and poor Duncan was like to perish with hunger;—he could find no person in the house; but hearing a noise in his aunt's chamber, he went in, and beheld them dressing the corpse of his kind relation;—it was enough.—Duncan was horrified beyond what mortal breast was able to endure;—he hasted down the stair, and ran along the High Street, and South Bridge, as fast as his feet could carry him, crying incessantly all the way. He would not have entered that house again, if the world had been offered him as a reward. Some people stopped him, in order to ask what was the matter; but he could only answer them by exclaiming, "O! dear! O! dear!" and, struggling till he got free, held on his course, careless whither he went, provided he got far enough from the horrid scene he had so lately witnessed. Some have supposed, and I believe Duncan has been heard to confess, that he then imagined he was running for the Highlands, but mistook the direction. However that was, he continued his course until he came to a place where two ways met, a little south of

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Grange Toll. Here he sat down, and his frenzied passion subsided into a soft melancholy;—he cried no more, but sobbed excessively; fixed his eyes on the ground, and made some strokes in the dust with his finger.

A sight just then appeared, which somewhat cheered, or at least interested his heavy and forlorn heart—it was a large drove of Highland cattle. They were the only creatures like acquaintances that Duncan had seen for a twelvemonth, and a tender feeling of joy, mixed with regret, thrilled his heart at the sight of their white horns and broad dew-laps. As the van passed him, he thought their looks were particularly gruff and sullen; he soon perceived the cause, they were all in the hands of Englishmen;—poor exiles like himself;—going far away to be killed and eaten, and would never see the Highland hills again!

When they were all gone by, Duncan looked after them and wept anew; but his attention was suddenly called away to something that softly touched his feet; he looked hastily about—it was a poor hungry lame dog, squatted on the ground, licking his feet, and manifesting the most extravagant joy. Gracious Heaven! it was his own beloved and faithful Oscar! starved, emaciated, and so crippled, that he was scarcely able to walk! He was now doomed to be the slave of a Yorkshire peasant, (who, it seems, had either bought or stolen him at Falkirk,) the generosity and benevolence of whose feelings were as inferior to those of Oscar, as Oscar was inferior to him in strength and power. It is impossible to conceive a more tender meeting than this was; but Duncan soon observed that hunger and misery were painted in his friend's looks, which again pierced his heart with feelings unfelt before. "I have not a crumb to give you, my poor Oscar!" said he—"I have not a crumb to eat myself, but I am not so ill as you are." The peasant whistled aloud. Oscar well knew the sound, and clinging to the boy's bosom, leaned his head

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upon his thigh, and looked in his face, as if saying, "O Duncan, protect me from yon ruffian." The whistle was repeated accompanied by a loud and surly call. Oscar trembled, but fearing to disobey, he limped away reluctantly after his unfeeling master, who, observing him to linger and look back, imagined he wanted to effect his escape, and came running back to meet him. Oscar cowered to the earth in the most submissive and imploring manner, but the peasant laid hold of him by the ear, and uttering many imprecations, struck him with a thick staff till he lay senseless at his feet.

Every possible circumstance seemed combined to wound the feelings of poor Duncan, but this unmerited barbarity shocked him most of all. He hasted to the scene of action, weeping bitterly, and telling the man that he was a cruel brute; and that if ever he himself grew a big man he would certainly kill him. He held up his favourite's head that he might recover his breath, and the man knowing that he could do little without his dog, waited patiently to see what would be the issue. The animal recovered, and stammered away at the heels of his tyrant without daring to look behind him. Duncan stood still, but kept his eyes eagerly fixed upon Oscar, and the farther he went from him, the more strong his desire grew to follow him. He looked the other way, but all there was to him a blank,—he had no desire to stand where he was, so he followed Oscar and the drove of cattle.

The cattle were weary and went slowly, and Duncan, getting a little goad in his hand, assisted the men greatly in driving them. One of the drivers gave him a penny, and another gave him twopence; and the lad who had the charge of the drove, observing how active and pliable he was, and how far he had accompanied him on the way, gave him sixpence; this was a treasure to Duncan, who, being extremely hungry, bought three penny rolls as he passed through a town; one of these he ate himself, another he gave to Oscar; and the

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third he carried below his arm in case of farther necessity. He drove on all the day, and at night the cattle rested upon a height, which, by his description, seems to have been that between Gala Water and Middleton. Duncan went off at a side, in company with Oscar, to eat his roll, and, taking shelter behind an old earthen wall, they shared their dry meal most lovingly between them. Ere it was quite finished, Duncan being fatigued, dropped into a profound slumber, out of which he did not awake until the next morning was far advanced. Englishmen, cattle, and Oscar, all were gone. Duncan found himself alone on a wild height, in what country or kingdom he knew not. He sat for some time in a callous stupor, rubbing his eyes and scratching his head, but quite irresolute what was farther necessary for him to do, until he was agreeably surprised by the arrival of Oscar, who (although he had gone at his master's call in the morning) had found means to escape and seek the retreat of his young friend and benefactor. Duncan, without reflecting on the consequences, rejoiced in the event, and thought of nothing else than furthering his escape from the ruthless tyrant who now claimed him. For this purpose he thought it would be best to leave the road, and accordingly he crossed it, in order to go over a waste moor to the westward. He had not got forty paces from the road, until he beheld the enraged Englishman running towards him without his coat, and having his staff heaved over his shoulder. Duncan's heart fainted within him, knowing it was all over with Oscar, and most likely with himself. The peasant seemed not to have observed them, as he was running, and rather looking the other way; and as Duncan quickly lost sight of him in a hollow place that lay between them, he crept into a bush of heath, and took Oscar in his bosom;—the heath was so long that it almost closed above them; the man had observed from whence the dog started in the morning, and hasted to the place, expecting to find him sleeping beyond the

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old earthen dike; he found the nest, but the birds w flown;—he called aloud; Oscar trembled and clung to D can's breast; Duncan peeped from his purple covert li heath-cock on his native waste, and again beheld the ru coming straight towards them, with his staff still heaved, fury in his looks;—when he came within a few yards he s still and bellowed out: "Oscar, yho, yho!" Oscar qua and crept still closer to Duncan's breast; Duncan al sunk in the earth; "D——n him," said the English "if I had a hold of him I should make both him and little thievish rascal dear at a small price; they cannot be gone,—I think I hear them;" he then stood listening, bu that instant a farmer came up on horseback, and having he him call, asked him if he had lost his dog? The peasant swered in the affirmative, and added, that a blackguard had stolen him. The farmer said that he met a boy wit dog about a mile forward. During this dialogue, the farm dog came up to Duncan's den,—smelled upon him, and th upon Oscar,—cocked his tail, walked round them growli and then behaved in a very improper and uncivil manner Duncan, who took all patiently, uncertain whether he was y discovered. But so intent was the fellow upon the farme intelligence, that he took no notice of the discovery made b the dog, but ran off without looking over his shoulder.

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Though I had his history from his own mouth, yet there is a space here which it is impossible to relate with any degree of distinctness or interest. He was a vagabond boy, without

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ed the light glide slowly by my right foot, and burn behind me;—I was nothing afraid, and turned about to look at the light, and there I saw the piper, who was standing hard at my back, and when I turned round, he looked me in the face." "What was he like, Duncan?" "He was like a dead body! but I got a short view of him; for that moment all around

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any fixed habitation, and wandered about Herriot Moor, from one farm-house to another, for the space of a year; staying from one to twenty nights in each house, according as he found the people kind to him. He seldom resented any indignity offered to himself, but whoever insulted Oscar, or offered any observations on the impropriety of their friendship, lost Duncan's company the next morning. He staid several months at a place called Dewar, which he said was haunted by the ghost of a piper; that piper had been murdered there many years before, in a manner somewhat mysterious, or at least unaccountable; and there was scarcely a night on which he was not supposed either to be seen or heard about the house. Duncan slept in the cow-house, and was terribly harassed by the piper; he often heard him scratching about the rafters, and sometimes he would groan like a man dying, or a cow that was choaked in the band; but at length he saw him at his side one night, which so discomposed him, that he was obliged to leave the place, after being ill for many days. I shall give this story in Duncan's own words, which I have often heard him repeat without any variation.

"I had been driving some young cattle to the heights of Willenslee—it grew late before I got home.—I was thinking, and thinking, how cruel it was to kill the poor piper! to cut out his tongue, and stab him in the back. I thought it was no wonder that his ghost took it extremely ill; when, all on a sudden, I perceived a light before me;—I thought the wand in my hand was all on fire, and threw it away, but I perceived the light glide slowly by my right foot, and burn behind me;—I was nothing afraid, and turned about to look at the light, and there I saw the piper, who was standing hard at my back, and when I turned round, he looked me in the face." "What was he like, Duncan?" "He was like a dead body! but I got a short view of him; for that moment all around

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me grew dark as a pit!—I tried to run, but sunk powerless to the earth, and lay in a kind of dream, I do not know how long; when I came to myself, I got up, and endeavoured to run, but fell to the ground every two steps. I was not a hundred yards from the house, and I am sure I fell upwards of a hundred times. Next day I was in a high fever; the servants made me a little bed in the kitchen, to which I was confined by illness many days, during which time I suffered the most dreadful agonies by night, always imagining the piper to be standing over me on the one side or the other. As soon as I was able to walk, I left Dewar, and for a long time durst neither sleep alone during the night, nor stay by myself in the day-time."

The superstitious ideas impressed upon Duncan's mind by this unfortunate encounter with the ghost of the piper, seem never to have been eradicated; a strong instance of the power of early impressions, and a warning how much caution is necessary in modelling the conceptions of the young and tender mind, for, of all men I ever knew, he is the most afraid of meeting with apparitions. So deeply is his imagination tainted with this startling illusion, that even the calm disquisitions of reason have proved quite inadequate to the task of dispelling it. Whenever it wears late, he is always on the look-out for these ideal beings, keeping a jealous eye upon every bush and brake, in case they should be lurking behind them, ready to fly out and surprise him every moment; and the approach of a person in the dark, or any sudden noise, always deprives him of the power of speech for some time.

After leaving Dewar, he again wandered about for a few weeks; and it appears that his youth, beauty, and peculiarly destitute situation, together with his friendship for his faithful Oscar, had interested the most part of the country people in his behalf; for he was generally treated with kindness. He knew his father's name, and the name of his house;

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but as none of the people he visited had ever before heard of either the one or the other, they gave themselves no trouble about the matter.

He staid nearly two years in a place called Cowhaur, until a wretch, with whom he slept, struck and abused him one day. Duncan, in a rage, flew to the loft, and cut all his Sunday hat, shoes, and coat, in pieces; and, not daring to abide the consequences, decamped that night.

He wandered about for some time longer, among the farmers of Tweed and Yarrow; but this life was now become exceedingly disagreeable to him. He durst not sleep by himself, and the servants did not always choose to allow a vagrant boy and his great dog to sleep with them.

It was on a rainy night, at the close of harvest, that Duncan came to my father's house. I remember all the circumstances as well as the transactions of yesterday. The whole of his clothing consisted only of a black coat, which, having been made for a full-grown man, hung fairly to his heels; the hair of his head was rough, curly, and weather-beaten; but his face was ruddy and beautiful, bespeaking a healthy body, and a sensible feeling heart. Oscar was still nearly as large as himself, and the colour of a fox, having a white stripe down his face, with a ring of the same colour around his neck, and was the most beautiful colley I have ever seen. My heart was knit to Duncan at the first sight, and I wept for joy when I saw my parents so kind to him. My mother, in particular, could scarcely do any thing else than converse with Duncan for several days. I was always of the party, and listened with wonder and admiration; but often have these adventures been repeated to me. My parents, who soon seemed to feel the same concern for him as if he had been their own son, clothed him in blue drugget, and bought him a smart little Highland bonnet; in which dress he looked so charming, that I would not let them have peace until I got one of the same. Indeed,

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all that Duncan said or did was to me a pattern; for I loved him as my own life. At my own request, which he persuaded me to urge, I was permitted to be his bed-fellow, and many a happy night and day did I spend with Duncan and Oscar.

As far as I remember, we felt no privation of any kind, and would have been completely happy, if it had not been for the fear of spirits. When the conversation chanced to turn upon the Piper of Dewar, the Maid of Plora, or the Pedlar of Thirlestane Mill, often have we lain with the bed-clothes drawn over our heads till nearly suffocated. We loved the fairies and the brownies, and even felt a little partiality for the mermaids, on account of their beauty and charming songs; but we were a little jealous of the water-kelpies, and always kept aloof from the frightsome pools. We hated the devil most heartily, although we were not much afraid of him; but a ghost! oh, dreadful! the names, ghost, spirit, or apparition, sounded in our ears like the knell of destruction, and our hearts sunk within us as if pierced by the cold icy shaft of death. Duncan herded my father's cows all the summer—so did I—we could not live asunder. We grew such expert fishers, that the speckled trout, with all his art, could not elude our machinations; we forced him from his watery cove, admired the beautiful shades and purple drops that were painted on his sleek sides, and forthwith added him to our number without reluctance. We assailed the habitation of the wild bee, and rifled her of all her accumulated sweets, though not without encountering the most determined resistance. My father's meadows abounded with hives; they were almost in every swath—in every hillock. When the swarm was large, they would beat us off, day after day. In all these desperate engagements, Oscar came to our assistance, and, provided that none of the enemy made a lodgment in his lower defiles, he was always the last combatant of our party on the field. I do not remember of ever be-

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ing so much diverted by any scene I ever witnessed, or laughing as immoderately as I have done at seeing Oscar involved in a moving cloud of wild bees, wheeling, mapping on all sides, and shaking his ears incessantly.

The sagacity which this animal possessed is almost incredible, while his undaunted spirit and generosity would do honour to every servant of our own species to copy. Twice did he save his master's life: at one time when attacked by a furious bull, and at another time when he fell from behind my father, off a horse in a flooded river. Oscar had just swimmed across, but instantly plunged in a second time to his master's rescue. He first got hold of his bonnet, but that coming off, he quitted it, and again catching him by the coat, brought him to the side, where my father reached him. He waked Duncan at a certain hour every morning, and would frequently turn the cows of his own will, when he observed them wrong. If Duncan dropped his knife, or any other small article, he would fetch it along in his mouth; and if sent back for a lost thing, would infallibly find it. When sixteeen years of age, after being unwell for several days, he died one night below his master's bed. On the evening before, when Duncan came in from the plough, he came from his hiding-place, wagged his tail, licked Duncan's hand, and returned to his death-bed. Duncan and I lamented him with unfeigned sorrow, buried him below the old rowan tree at the back of my father's garden, placing a square stone at his head, which was still standing the last time I was there. With great labour, we composed an epitaph between us, which was once carved on that stone; the metre was good, but the stone was so hard, and the engraving so faint, that the characters, like those of our early joys, are long ago defaced and extinct.

Often have I heard my mother relate with enthusiasm, the manner in which she and my father first discovered the dawn-

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ings of goodness and facility of conception in Duncan's mind, though, I confess, dearly as I loved him, these circumstances escaped my observation. It was my father's invariable custom to pray with the family every night before they retired to rest, to thank the Almighty for his kindness to them during the bygone day, and to beg his protection through the dark and silent watches of the night. I need not inform any of my readers, that that amiable (and now too much neglected and despised) duty, consisted in singing a few stanzas of a psalm, in which all the family joined their voices with my father's, so that the double octaves of the various ages and sexes swelled the simple concert. He then read a chapter from the Bible, going straight on from beginning to end of the Scriptures. The prayer concluded the devotions of each evening, in which the downfall of Antichrist was always strenuously urged, the ministers of the Gospel remembered, nor was any friend or neighbour in distress forgot.

The servants of a family have, in general, liberty either to wait the evening prayers, or retire to bed as they incline, but no consideration whatever could induce Duncan to go one night to rest without the prayers, even though both wet and weary, and entreated by my parents to retire, for fear of catching cold. It seems that I had been of a more complaisant disposition; for I was never very hard to prevail with in this respect; nay, my mother used to say, that I was extremely apt to take a pain about my heart at that time of the night, and was, of course, frequently obliged to betake me to the bed before the worship commenced.

It might be owing to this that Duncan's emotions on these occasions escaped my notice. He sung a treble to the old church tunes most sweetly, for he had a melodious voice; and when my father read the chapter, if it was in any of the historical parts of Scripture, he would lean upon the table, and look him in the face, swallowing every sentence with the ut-

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most avidity. At one time, as my father read the 45th chapter of Genesis, he wept so bitterly, that at the end my father paused, and asked what ailed him? Duncan told him that he did not know.

At another time, the year following, my father, in the course of his evening devotions, had reached the 19th chapter of the book of Judges; when he began reading it, Duncan was seated on the other side of the house, but ere it was half done, he had stolen up close to my father's elbow. "Consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds," said my father, and closed the book. "Go on, go on if you please, Sir," said Duncan—"go on, and let us hear what they said about it." My father looked sternly in Duncan's face, but seeing him abashed on account of his hasty breach of decency, without uttering a word, he again opened the Bible, and read the 20th chapter throughout, notwithstanding of its great length. Next day Duncan was walking about with the Bible below his arm, begging of every body to read it to him again and again. This incident produced a conversation between my parents, on the expenses and utility of education; the consequence of which was, that the week following, Duncan and I were sent to the parish school, and began at the same instant to the study of that most important and fundamental branch of literature, the A, B, C; but my sister Mary, who was older than I, was already an accurate and elegant reader.

This reminds me of another anecdote of Duncan, with regard to family worship, which I have often heard related, and which I myself may well remember. My father happening to be absent over night at a fair, when the usual time of worship arrived, my mother desired a lad, one of the servants, to act as chaplain for that night; the lad declined it, and slunk away to his bed. My mother testified her regret that we should all be obliged to go prayerless to our beds for that night, observing, that she did not remember the time when

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it had so happened before. Duncan said, he thought we might contrive to manage it amongst us, and instantly proposed to sing the psalm and pray, if Mary would read the chapter. To this my mother with some hesitation agreed, remarking, that if he prayed as he could, with a pure heart, his prayer had as good a chance of being accepted as some others that were *better worded*. Duncan could not then read, but having learned several psalms from Mary by rote, he caused her seek out the place, and sung the 23d Psalm from end to end, with great sweetness and decency. Mary read a chapter in the New Testament, and then (my mother having a child on her knee,) we three kneeled in a row, while Duncan prayed thus:—"O Lord, be thou our God, our guide, and our guard unto death, and through death," that was a sentence my father often used in his prayer; Duncan had laid hold of it, and my mother began to think that he had often prayed previous to that time.—"O Lord, thou"—continued Duncan, but his matter was exhausted; a long pause ensued, which I at length broke, by bursting into a loud fit of laughter. Duncan rose hastily, and, without once lifting up his head, went crying to his bed; and as I continued to indulge in laughter, my mother, for my irreverend behaviour, struck me across the shoulders with the tongs; our evening devotions terminated exceedingly ill, I went crying to my bed after Duncan, even louder than he, and abusing him for his *useless prayer*, for which I had been nearly felled.

By the time that we were recalled from school to herd the cows next summer, we could both read the Bible with considerable facility, but Duncan far excelled me in perspicacity; and so fond was he of reading Bible history, that the reading of it was now our constant amusement. Often have Mary, and he, and I, lain under the same plaid by the side of the corn or meadow, and read chapter about on the Bible for hours together, weeping over the failings and fall of good

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men, and wondering at the inconceivable might of the heroes of antiquity. Never was man so delighted as Duncan was when he came to the history of Samson, and afterwards of David and Goliath; he could not be satisfied until he had read it to every individual with whom he was acquainted, judging it to be as new and as interesting to every one as it was to himself. I have seen him standing by the girls as they were milking the cows, reading to them the feats of Samson; and, in short, harassing every man and woman about the hamlet for audience. On Sundays, my parents accompanied us to the fields, and joined in our delightful exercise.

Time passed away, and so also did our youthful delights! but other cares and other pleasures awaited us. As we advanced in years and strength, we quitted the herding, and bore a hand in the labours of the farm. Mary, too, was often our assistant. She and Duncan were nearly of an age—he was tall, comely, and affable; and if Mary was not the prettiest girl in the parish, at least Duncan and I believed her to be so, which, with us, amounted to the same thing. We often compared the other girls in the parish with one another, as to their beauty and accomplishments, but to think of comparing any of them with Mary, was entirely out of the question. She was, indeed, the emblem of truth, simplicity, and innocence, and if there were few more beautiful, there were still fewer so good and amiable; but still as she advanced in years, she grew fonder and fonder of being near Duncan; and by the time she was nineteen, was so deeply in love, that it affected her manner, her spirits, and her health. At one time she was gay and frisky as a kitten; she would dance, sing, and laugh violently at the most trivial incidents. At other times she was silent and sad, while a languishing softness overspread her features, and added greatly to her charms. The passion was undoubtedly mutual between them; but Duncan, either from a sense of honour, or some other cause, never declared

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himself farther on the subject, than by the most respectful attention, and tender assiduities. Hope and fear thus alternately swayed the heart of poor Mary, and produced in her deportment that variety of affections, which could not fail of rendering the sentiments of her artless bosom legible to the eye of experience.

In this state matters stood, when an incident occurred which deranged our happiness at once, and the time arrived when the kindest and most affectionate little social band of friends, that ever panted to meet the wishes of each other, were obliged to part.

About forty years ago, the flocks of southern sheep, which have since that period inundated the Highlands, had not found their way over the Grampian mountains; and the native flocks of that sequestered country were so scanty, that it was found necessary to transport small quantities of wool annually to the north, to furnish materials for clothing the inhabitants. During two months of each summer, the hill countries of the Lowlands were inundated by hundreds of women from the Highlands, who bartered small articles of dress, and of domestic import, for wool: these were known by the appellation of *norlan' netties;* and few nights passed, during the wool season, that some of them were not lodged at my father's house. It was from two of these that Duncan learned one day who and what he was; that he was the laird of Glenellich's only son and heir, and that a large sum had been offered to any person that could discover him. My parents certainly rejoiced in Duncan's good fortune, yet they were disconsolate at parting with him; for he had long ago become as a son of their own; and I seriously believe, that from the day they first met, to that on which the two *norlan' netties* came to our house, they never once entertained the idea of parting. For my part, I wished that the netties had never been born, or that they had staid at their own home; for the thoughts of being separated

from my dear friend made me sick at heart. All our feelings were, however, nothing, when compared with those of my sister Mary. From the day that the two women left our house, she was no more seen to smile; she had never yet divulged the sentiments of her heart to any one, and imagined her love for Duncan a profound secret—no,

> "She never told her love;
> But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
> Feed on her damask cheek;—she pined in thought;
> And, with a green and yellow melancholy,
> She sat, like patience on a monument,
> Smiling at grief."

Our social glee and cheerfulness were now completely clouded; we sat down to our meals, and rose from them in silence. Of the few observations that passed, every one seemed the progeny of embarrassment and discontent, and our general remarks were strained and cold. One day at dinner, after a long and sullen pause, my father said, "I hope you do not intend to leave us very soon, Duncan?" "I am thinking of going away to-morrow, Sir," said Duncan. The knife fell from my mother's hand; she looked him steadily in the face for the space of a minute. "Duncan," said she, her voice faultering, and the tears dropping from her eyes,—"Duncan, I never durst ask you before, but I hope you will not leave us altogether?" Duncan thrust the plate from before him into the middle of the table—took up a book that lay on the window, and looked over the pages—Mary left the room. No answer was returned, nor any further inquiry made; and our little party broke up in silence.

When we met again in the evening, we were still all sullen. My mother tried to speak of indifferent things, but it was apparent that her thoughts had no share in the words that dropped from her tongue. My father at last said, "You will soon forget us, Duncan; but there are some among us

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who will not so soon forget you." Mary again left the room, and silence ensued, until the family were called together for evening worship. There was one sentence in my father's prayer that night, which I think I yet remember, word for word. It may appear of little importance to those who are nowise interested, but it affected us deeply, and left not a dry cheek in the family. It runs thus: "We are an unworthy little flock, thou seest here kneeling before thee, our God; but few as we are, it is probable we shall never all kneel again together before thee in this world. We have long lived together in peace and happiness, and hoped to have lived so much longer; but since it is thy will that we part, enable us to submit to that will with firmness; and though thou scatter us to the four winds of heaven, may thy Almighty arm still be about us for good, and grant that we may all meet hereafter in another and a better world."

The next morning, after a restless night, Duncan rose early, put on his best suit, and packed up some little articles to carry with him. I lay panting and trembling, but pretended to be fast asleep. When he was ready to depart, he took his bundle below his arm, came up to the side of the bed, and listened if I was sleeping. He then stood long hesitating, looking wistfully to the door, and then to me, alternately; and I saw him three or four times wipe his eyes. At length he shook me gently by the shoulder, and asked if I was awake. I feigned to start, and answered as if half asleep. "I must bid you farewell," said he, groping to get hold of my hand. "Will you not breakfast with us, Duncan?" said I. "No," said he, "I am thinking that it is best to steal away, for it will break my heart to take leave of your parents, and"—"And who, Duncan?" said I. "And you," said he. "Indeed, but it is not best, Duncan," said I; "we will all breakfast together for the last time, and then take a formal and kind leave of each other." We did breakfast together, and as the

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conversation turned on former days, it became highly interesting to us all. When my father had returned thanks to Heaven for our meal, we knew what was coming, and began to look at each other. Duncan rose, and after we had all loaded him with our blessings and warmest wishes, he embraced my parents and me.—He turned about.—His eyes said plainly, there is somebody still wanting, but his heart was so full he could not speak. "What is become of Mary?" said my father;—Mary was gone.—We searched the house, the garden, and the houses of all the cottagers, but she was nowhere to be found.—Poor lovelorn forsaken Mary! She had hid herself in the ancient yew that grows in the front of the old ruin, that she might see her lover depart, without herself being seen, and might indulge in all the luxury of wo.—Poor Mary! how often have I heard her sigh, and seen her eyes red with weeping; while the smile that played on her languid features, when ought was mentioned to Duncan's recommendation, would have melted a heart of adamant.

I must pass over Duncan's journey to the north Highlands for want of room, but on the evening of the sixth day after leaving my father's house, he reached the mansion-house of Glenellich, which stands in a little beautiful woody strath, commanding a view of the Deu-Caledonian Sea, and part of the Hebrides; every avenue, tree, and rock, was yet familiar to Duncan's recollection; and the feelings of his sensible heart, on approaching the abode of his father, whom he had long scarcely thought of, can only be conceived by a heart like his own. He had, without discovering himself, learned from a peasant that his father was still alive, but that he had never overcome the loss of his son, for whom he lamented every day; that his wife and daughter lorded it over him, holding his pleasure at nought, and rendered his age extremely unhappy; that they had expelled all his old farmers and vassals, and in-

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troduced the lady's vulgar presumptuous relations, who neither paid him rents, honour, nor obedience.

Old Glenellich was taking his evening walk on the road by which Duncan descended the strath to his dwelling. He was pondering on his own misfortunes, and did not even deign to lift his eyes as the young stranger approached, but seemed counting the number of marks which the horses' hoofs had made on the way. "Good e'en to you, Sir," said Duncan;—the old man started and stared him in the face, but with a look so unsteady and harassed, that he seemed incapable of distinguishing any lineament or feature of it. "Good e'en, good e'en," said he, wiping his brow with his arm, and passing by.—What there was in the voice that struck him so forcibly it is hard to say.—Nature is powerful.—Duncan could not think of ought to detain him; and being desirous of seeing how matters went on about the house, thought it best to remain some days *incog*. He went into the fore-kitchen, conversed freely with the servants, and soon saw his stepmother and sister appear. The former had all the insolence and ignorant pride of vulgarity raised to wealth and eminence; the other seemed naturally of an amiable disposition, but was entirely ruled by her mother, who taught her to disdain her father, all his relations, and whomsoever he loved. On that same evening he came into the kitchen, where she then was chatting with Duncan, to whom she seemed attached at first sight. "Lexy, my dear," said he, "did you see my spectacles?" "Yes," said she, "I think I saw them on your nose to-day at breakfast." "Well, but I have lost them since," said he. "You may take up the next you find then, Sir," said she.—The servants laughed. "I might well have known what information I would get of you," said he, regretfully. "How can you speak in such a style to your father, my dear lady?" said Duncan.—"If I were he I would place you where you should learn better manners.—It ill becomes so pretty a

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young lady to address an old father thus." "He!" said she, "who minds him? He's a dotard, an old whining, complaining, superannuated being, worse than a child," "But consider his years," said Duncan; "and besides, he may have met with crosses and losses sufficient to sour the temper of a younger man.—You should at all events pity and reverence, but never despise your father." The old lady now joined them. "You have yet heard nothing, young man," said the old laird, "if you saw how my heart is sometimes wrung.—Yes, I have had losses indeed." "You losses!" said his spouse;—"No; you have never had any losses that did not in the end turn out a vast profit."—"Do you then account the loss of a loving wife and a son nothing?" said he—"But have you not got a loving wife and a daughter in their room?" returned she; "the one will not waste your fortune as a prodigal son would have done, and the other will take care of both you and that, when *you* can no longer do either—the loss of your son indeed! it was the greatest blessing you could have received!" "Unfeeling woman," said he; "but Heaven may yet restore that son to protect the gray hairs of his old father, and lay his head in an honoured grave." The old man's spirits were quite gone—he cried like a child—his lady mimicked him—and at this, his daughter and the servants raised a laugh. "Inhuman wretches," said Duncan, starting up, and pushing them aside, "thus to mock the feelings of an old man, even although he were not the lord and master of you all: but take notice—the individual among you all that dares to offer such another insult to him, I'll roast on that fire." The old man clung to him, and looked him ruefully in the face. "You impudent, beggarly vagabond!" said the lady, "do you know to whom you speak?—servants turn that wretch out of the house, and hunt him with all the dogs in the kennel." "Softly, softly, good lady," said Duncan, "take care that I do not turn you out of the house."—"Alas! good youth," said the

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old laird, "you little know what you are about; for mercy's sake forbear; you are brewing vengeance both for yourself and me." "Fear not," said Duncan, "I will protect you with my life." "Pray, may I ask you what is your name?" said the old man, still looking earnestly at him—"That you may," replied Duncan, "no man has so good a right to ask any thing of me as you have—I am Duncan Campbell, your own son." "*M-m-m-my* son!" exclaimed the old man, and sunk back on a seat with a convulsive moan. Duncan held him in his arms—he soon recovered, and asked many incoherent questions—looked at the two moles on his right leg—kissed him, and then wept on his bosom for joy. "O God of heaven," said he, "it is long since I could thank thee heartily for any thing; now I do thank thee indeed, for I have found my son! my dear and only son!"

Contrary to what might have been expected, Duncan's pretty only sister Alexia rejoiced most of all in his discovery. She was almost wild with joy at finding such a brother.—The old lady, her mother, was said to have wept bitterly in private, but knowing that Duncan would be her master, she behaved to him with civility and respect. Every thing was committed to his management, and he soon discovered, that besides a good clear estate, his father had personal funds to a great amount. The halls and cottages of Glenellich were filled with feasting, joy, and gladness.

It was not so at my father's house. Misfortunes seldom come singly. Scarcely had our feelings overcome the shock which they received by the loss of our beloved Duncan, when a more terrible misfortune overtook us. My father, by the monstrous ingratitude of a friend whom he trusted, lost at once the greater part of his hard-earned fortune. The blow came unexpectedly, and distracted his personal affairs to such a degree, that an arrangement seemed almost totally impracticable. He struggled on with securities for several months;

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but perceiving that he was drawing his real friends into danger, by their signing of bonds which he might never be able to redeem, he lost heart entirely, and yielded to the torrent. Mary's mind seemed to gain fresh energy every day. The activity and diligence which she evinced in managing the affairs of the farm, and even in giving advice with regard to other matters, is quite incredible;—often have I thought what a treasure that inestimable girl would have been to an industrious man whom she loved. All our efforts availed nothing; my father received letters of horning on bills to a large amount, and we expected every day that he would be taken from us and dragged to a prison.

We were all sitting in our little room one day, consulting what was best to be done—we could decide upon nothing, for our case was desperate—we were fallen into a kind of stupor, but the window being up, a sight appeared that quickly thrilled every heart with the keenest sensations of anguish. Two men came riding sharply up by the back of the old school house. "Yonder are the officers of justice now," said my mother, "what shall we do?" We hurried to the window, and all of us soon discerned that they were no other than some attorney, accompanied by a sheriff's officer. My mother entreated of my father to escape and hide himself until this first storm was over-blown, but he would in nowise consent, assuring us that he had done nothing of which he was ashamed, and that he was determined to meet every one face to face, and let them do their worst; so finding all our entreaties vain, we could do nothing but sit down and weep. At length we heard the noise of their horses at the door. "You had better take the men's horses, James," said my father, "as there is no other man at hand." "We will stay till they rap, if you please," said I. The cautious officer did not however rap, but, afraid lest his debtor should make his escape, he jumped lightly from his horse,

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and hasted into the house. When we heard him open the outer door, and his footsteps approaching along the entry, our hearts fainted within us—he opened the door and stepped into the room—it was Duncan! our own dearly beloved Duncan. The women uttered an involuntary scream of surprise, but my father ran and got hold of one hand, and I of the other—my mother too soon had him in her arms, but our embrace was short; for his eyes fixed on Mary, who stood trembling with joy and wonder in a corner of the room, changing her colour every moment—he snatched her up in his arms and kissed her lips, and ere ever she was aware, her arms had encircled his neck. "O my dear Mary," said he, "my heart has been ill at ease since I left you, but I durst not then tell you a word of my mind, for I little knew how I was to find affairs in the place where I was going; but ah! you little elusive rogue, you owe me another for the one you cheated me out of then;" so saying, he pressed his lips again to her cheek, and then led her to a seat. Duncan then recounted all his adventures to us, with every circumstance of his good fortune—our hearts were uplifted almost past bearing—all our cares and sorrows were now forgotten, and we were once more the happiest little group that ever perhaps sat together. Before the cloth was laid for dinner, Mary ran out to put on her white gown, and comb her yellow hair, but was surprised at meeting with a smart young gentleman in the kitchen, with a scarlet neck on his coat, and a gold-laced hat. Mary, having never seen so fine a gentleman, made him a low courtesy, and offered to conduct him to the room: but he smiled, and told her he was the squire's servant. We had all of us forgot to ask for the gentleman that came with Duncan.

Duncan and Mary walked for two hours in the garden that evening—we did not know what passed between them, but the next day he asked her in marriage of my parents,

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and never will I forget the supreme happiness and gratitude that beamed in every face on that happy occasion. I need not tell my readers that my father's affairs were soon retrieved, or that I accompanied my dear Mary a bride to the Highlands, and had the satisfaction of saluting her as Mrs Campbell, and Lady of Glenellich.

AN OLD SOLDIER'S TALE.

"Ye didna use to be sae hard-hearted wi' me, goodwife," said Andrew Gemble to old Margaret, as he rested his meal-pocks on the corner of the table: "If ye'll let me bide a' night I'll tell you a tale." Andrew well knew the way to Margaret's heart. "It's no to be the battle o' Culloden, then, Andrew, ye hae gart me greet owre often about that already." "Weel, weel, good-wife, it sanna be the battle o' Culloden, though I like whiles to crack about the feats o' my young days." "Ah, Andrew! I'll ne'er forgie you for stabbing the young Stuart o' Appin. I wish God may forgie you: but if ye dinna repent o' that, ye'll hae a black account to render again *ae day*." "Aye, but it will maybe be lang till that day; an' I'll just tell ye, goodwife, that I'll *never* repent o' that deed. I wad hae stickit a' the rebel crew, an' their papish prince, the same way, if I could hae laid my neeves on him; repent, quo' she!"

"Andrew, ye may gae your ways down to Deephope, we hae nae bed to lay ye in; ye're no gaun to bide here a' night, an' the morn the Sabbath day." "There's for ye now! there's for ye! that's the gratitude that an auld sodger's to expect frae the fock that he has sae often ventured his life for! weel, weel, I'll rather trodge away down to Deephope,

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auld, an' stiff, an' wearied as I am, ere I'll repent when ony auld witch in the country bids me." "Come your ways into this cozy nook ayont me, Andrew; I'll e'en tak you in for ae night without repentance. We should a' do as we would like to be done to." "The deil tak' ye, goodwife, gin ye' haena spoken a mouthfu' sense for aince; fair fa' your honest heart, you are your father's bairn yet, for a' that's come an' gane." But the unyielding spirit of Andrew never forsook him for a moment. He was no sooner seated, than, laying his meal-pocks aside, and turning his dim eye towards old Margaret, with a malicious grin, he sung the following stanza of an old song, with a hollow and tremulous croon:

"O the fire, the fire and the smoke
That frae our bold British flew,
When we surrounded the rebels rude,
That waefu' popish crew!
And O the blood o' the rebels rude
Alang the field that ran!
The hurdies bare we turned up there
Of many a Highland Clan."

But ere he had done with the last stanza, his antagonist had struck up in a louder and shriller key, "Hey, Johnny Cope, are ye waukin yet," &c. which quite drowned Andrew, and sharpened the acrimony of his temper. He called her "an auld jacobite"—and wished he "had ken'd her in the year forty sax, he wad hae gotten her strappit like a herring." He had however, given her her cue; she overpowered him with songs on the side of the Highlanders, against whom Andrew had served, all of them so scurrilous and severe, that he was glad to begin his tale that he might get quit of them: it was to the following effect, but were I to tell it in his own dialect, it would be unintelligible to the greater part of readers.

"You will often have heard, gudewife, that the Duke of

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Cumberland lay long in a state of inaction that year that he pursued the rebels to the north, so long indeed that many had concluded that he durst not follow them into their native fastnesses. The Duke, however, acted with great prudence, for the roads were bad, and the rivers impassable, and by remaining about Aberdeen until the return of Spring, he kept the rebels up among their mountains, and prevented them from committing depredations on the Lowlands.

"I was a sergeant in the Royals then, and was ordered to the westward, along with some of the Campbells, to secure certain passes and fortresses, by which the rebels kept up a communication with the south. We remained two weeks at a little village on the Don, but all was quiet on that road, nor did we ever lay hold of one suspicious character, though we kept a watch at the Bridge-end, both night and day. It was about the beginning of March, and the weather was dreadful; the snow was drifting every night; and the roads were so blocked up by wreaths and ice, that to march seemed impossible, although we knew that on the road west from us the Highlanders had established a line of communication; and besides, we could get nothing where we were, either to eat or drink. The gentlemen at head-quarters knew not that the snow lay so deep in the heights of Strath-Don, and we received orders to march directly to the westward, to the next line of road. None of us liked the duty we were engaged in, for besides being half famished with cold and hunger, we had accounts every day of great bodies of rebels that were hovering about the country of the Grants, and Brae-Mar, laying all true subjects under contribution, and taking from the country-people whatever they pleased. We were likewise alarmed by a report that John Roy Stuart, accompanied by the Maclauchlans, had cut in pieces all our forces stationed at Keith, which turned out a very trifling matter after all, but it left us as we supposed, quite exposed to every incursion from the north, and we were

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highly discontented. Captain Reginald Campbell commanded this flying party, a very brave fellow, and one to whom a soldier might speak as a friend. One day he came up from Lord Kintore's house, and after inspecting the different companies, he took me aside, and asked how I liked the service. "Faith, Captain," says I, "if we stay long here, you will soon have a poor account of us to render; the men are positively dying with hunger and cold. The Campbells make good shift, for they can talk the horrid jargon of the country; but as for us of the Royals, we can get not a morsel; and by G—d, Captain, if these d——d Macintoshes come down upon us, we will not be a mouthful to them. Poor Renwick and Colstan are both dead already; and curse me if I was not afraid that these hungry ragamuffins of the village would eat them."

"If ye are gaun to tell us a story, Andrew," said old Margaret, "tell it even on, without mixing it up wi' cursing and swearing. What good can that do to the story? Ye gar a' my heart dirle to hear ye."

"Owther let me tell it in my ain way, gudewife, or else want it."

"Weel, Andrew, I'll rather want it than hear ye tak' *His* name in vain."

"Wha's name? The deil's, I fancy; for the deil another name blew frae my tongue the night. It is a pity, gudewife, that ye sude be sic a great hypocrite! I hate a hypocrite! An' a' you that mak a fike an' a cant about religion, an' grane, an' pray, are hypocrites ilka soul o' ye. Ye are sodgers that haena the mense to do your duty, and then blubber an' whine for fear o' the lash. But I ken ye better than ye ken yoursel; ye wad rather hear nought else but swearing for a month, or ye didna hear out that story. Sae I'll e'en gae on wi't to please mysel; the deil-ma-care whether it please you or no!"

"When men die of cold, sergeant, it is for want of exer-

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cise," said he, "I must remedy this. Gemble, you are a brave fellow; take ten men with you, and a guide, and proceed into the district of Strathaven; look at the state of the roads, and bring me all the intelligence you can about these rebel clans that are hovering over us."

"Accordingly, I took the men and a guide, and one of the Campbells who could talk Gaelic, and proceeded to the north-west till I came to the Avon, a wild and rapid river; and keeping on its banks, through drift and snow, we turned in rather a southerly direction. We had not travelled long by the side of a stream till I observed that the road had very lately been traversed, either by a large body of men or cattle, yet it was so wholly drifted up that we could in nowise discover which of these it had been. It was moreover all sprinkled with blood, which had an ominous appearance, but none of us could tell what it meant. I observed that the two Highlanders, Campbell and the guide, spoke about it in their own language, in a vehement manner, and from their looks and motions I concluded that they were greatly alarmed; but when I asked them what they meant, or what they were saying, they made me no answer. I asked them what they supposed it to have been that made that track, and left all that blood upon the snow? but they only shook their heads and said, "they could not pe tehlling her." Still it appeared to have been shed in larger quantities as we proceeded; the wet snow that was falling had mixed with it, and gorged it up so, that it seemed often as if the road had been covered with hillocks of blood.

"At length we came to a large wood, and by the side of it a small hamlet, where some joiners and sawers resided, and here we commenced our inquiries. My two Highlanders asked plenty for their own information, but they spoke English badly, and were so averse to tell me any thing, that I had nearly lost all patience with them. At length, by dint of

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threats, and close questioning, I understood that the rebels had fortified two strong Castles to the southward, those of Corgarf and Brae-Mar—that a body of the Mackintoshes had past by that same place about three hours before our arrival, with from twenty to thirty horses, all laden with the carcasses of sheep which they had taken up on the Duke of Gordon's lands, and were carrying to Corgarf, which they were provisioning abundantly. I asked if there were any leaders or gentlemen of the party, and was answered, that Glenfernet and Spital were both with it, and that it was likely some more, either of the Farquharsons or Mackintoshes, would be passing or repassing there that same night or next morning. This was an unwelcome piece of news to me; for, owing to the fatigue we had undergone, and the fall of snow, which had increased the whole day, we could not again reach Strath-Don that night, nor indeed any place in our rear, for if we had essayed it, the wind and drift would have been straight in our faces. It appeared the most unaccountable circumstance to me I had ever seen, that the country at so short a distance should be completely under the control of the different armies; but it was owing to the lines of road from which there were no cross ones, or these only at great distances from one another.

"Necessity has no law; we were obliged to take up our quarters at this wretched Hamlet all night, at the imminent risk of our lives. We could get nothing to eat. There was not meat of any description in these cots that we could find, nor indeed have I ever seen any thing in these Highland bothies, saving sometimes a little milk or wretched cheese. We were obliged to go out a foraging, and at length, after great exertion, got hold of a she-goat, lean, and hard as wood, which we killed and began to roast on a fire of sticks. Ere ever we had tasted it, there came in a woman crying piteously, and pouring forth torrents of Gaelic, of which I could make no-

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thing. I understood, however, that the goat had belonged to her; it had however changed proprietors, and I offered her no redress. I had no trust to put in these savages, so I took them all prisoners, man and women, and confined them in the same cot with ourselves, lest they might have conveyed intelligence to the clans of our arrival, placing the two Highlanders as sentinels at the door, to prevent all ingress or egress until next morning. We then dried our muskets, loaded them anew, fixed our bayonets, and lay down to rest with our clothes on, wet and weary as we were. The cottagers, with their wives and children, lighted sticks on the fire, and with many wild gestures babbled and spoke Gaelic all the night. I, however, fell sound asleep, and I believe so did all my companions.

"About two in the morning one of the soldiers awaked me from a sound sleep, by shaking me by the shoulder, without speaking a word. It was a good while before I could collect my senses, or remember where I was, but all the while my ears were stunned by the discordant sounds of Gaelic, seemingly issuing from an hundred tongues. "What is all this, friend?" said I. "Hush," said he; "I suppose it is the Mackintoshes, we are all dead men, *that's all.*" "Oh! if *that be all,*" returned I, "that is a matter of small consequence; but d—n the Mackintoshes, if they shall not get as good as they give." "Hush!" whispered he again; "what a loss we cannot understand a word of their language. I think our sentinels are persuading them to pass on." With that one of our prisoners, an old man, called out, and was answered by one of the passengers, who then seemed to be going away. The old man then began a babbling and telling him something aloud, always turning a suspicious glance on me; but while he was yet in the middle of his speech, Campbell turned round, levelled his musket at the old rascal, and shot him dead.

"Such an uproar then commenced as never was before seen

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in so small a cot—women screaming like a parcel of she-goats; children mewing like cats; and men babbling and crying out in Gaelic, both without and within. Campbell's piece was reloaded in a moment, and need there was for expedition, for they were attacked at the door by the whole party, and at last twenty guns were all fired on them at once. The sod walls, however, sheltered us effectually, while every shot that we could get fired from the door or the holes in the wall, killed or wounded some, and whoever ventured in had two or three bayonets in each side at once. We were in a sad predicament, but it came upon us all in an instant, and we had no shift but to make the best of it we could, which we did without any dismay; and so safe did we find ourselves within our sod walls, that whenever any of them tried to break through the roof, we had such advantage, that we always beat them off at the first assault; and moreover, we saw them distinctly between us and the snow, but within all was darkness, and they could see nothing. That which plagued us most of all was the prisoners that we had within among us, for they were constantly in our way, and we were falling over them, and coming in violent contact with them in every corner; and though we kicked them and flung them from us in great wrath, to make them keep into holes, yet there was so many of them, and the house so small, it was impossible. We had now beat our enemies back from the door, and we took that opportunity of expelling our troublesome guests: our true Highlanders spoke something to them in Gaelic, which made them run out as for bare life. "Cresorst, cresorst," cried our guide; they ran still the faster, and were soon all out among the rebels. It was by my own express and hurried order that this was done, and never was any thing so imprudent! the whole party were so overjoyed that they set up a loud and reiterated shout, mixed with a hurra of laughter. What the devil's the matter now? thinks I to myself.

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I soon found that out to my sad experience. The poor cottagers had been our greatest safeguard; for the rebels no sooner knew that all their countrymen and their families were expelled and safely out, than they immediately set fire to the house on all sides. This was not very easily effected, owing to the wet snow that had fallen: besides, we had opened holes all the way around the heads of the walls, and kept them off as well as we could. It was not long, however, till we found ourselves involved in smoke, and likely to be suffocated. I gave orders instantly to sally out; but the door being triply guarded, we could not effect it. In one second we undermined the gable, which falling flat, we sallied forth into the midst of the rebels with fixed bayonets, and bore down all before us. The dogs could not stand our might, but reeled like the withered leaves of a forest that the winds whirl before them. I knew not how the combat terminated, for I soon found myself overpowered, and held fast down by at least half a dozen Highlanders. I swore dreadfully at them, but they only laughed at me, and, disarming me, tied my hands behind my back. "I'm not in a very good way now," thought I, as they were all keckling and speaking Gaelic around me. Two of them stood as sentinels over me for about the space of an hour, when the troop joined us in a body, and marched away, still keeping by the side of the river, and taking me along with them. It was now the break of day, and I looked about anxiously if I could see any of my companions; but none of them were with us, so I concluded that they were all killed. We came to a large and ugly-looking village called Tamantoul, inhabited by a set of the most outlandish ragamuffins that I ever in my life saw: the men were so ragged and rough in their appearance, that they looked rather like savages than creatures of a Christian country; and the women had no shame nor sense of modesty about them, and of this the Highland soldiers seemed quite sensible, and treated them

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accordingly. Here I was brought in before their commander for examination. He was one of the Farquharsons, a very civil and polite gentleman, but as passionate as a wild bull, and spoke the English language so imperfectly, that I deemed it convenient not to understand a word that he said, lest I should betray some secrets of my commander.

"Surcheon," said he, "you heffing peen tahken caring te harms, tat is, te kuns and te sorts, akainst our most plessit sohofrain, and his lennoch more Prince Sharles Stehuart, she shoold pe kiffing you ofer to pe shot in te heat wit powter and te pullets of kuns till you pe teat. Not te more, if you will pe cantor of worts to all tat she shall pe asking, akainst te accustoms of war you shall not pe shot wit powter and te pullets of kuns in te heat and prains till she pe teat, put you shall pe hold in free pondage, and peated wit sticks efry tay, and efry night, and efry mhorning, till she pe answering all and mhore."

"I beg your pardon, captain," says I, "but really I dinna understand Gaelic, or Earse, or how d'ye ca't: it is sic a blether o' a language, that nae living creature can understand it, gin it be na corbies and wullcats."

"Cot pe t—ming your improetence, and te hignorant of yourself, tat cannot pe tahking town hany ting into your stuhpid prain tat is not peing spohken in te vhile Lowlands prohgue. Hupupup! Cot pe tahking you for a pase repellioner of a Sassenach tief! Finlay Pawn Peg Macalister Monro, you are peing te most least of all my men, pe trawing hout your claymhore, and if you do not pe cutting hoff tat creat Sassenach repel's heat at wan plow, py te shoul of Tonald Farquharson, put yours shall answer for it."

"I'm in a waur scrape now than ever," thinks I to myself: however, I pretended to be listening attentively to all that the captain was saying, and when he had done I shook my

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head: "I am really sorry, captain," says I, "that I cannot understand a word that you are saying."

"Hu, shay, shay," said he, "she'll pe mhaking you to understand petter eneugh." I was then conducted to the back of the house, with all the men, women, and children in the village about me. The diminutive Finlay Bawn sharped his claymore deliberately upon a stone—the soldiers bared my neck, and I was ordered to lay it flat upon the stump of a tree that they had selected as a convenient block. "Captain," says I, "it is a shame for you to kill your prisoner whom you took fighting in the field for what he supposed to be the right: you are doing the same, and which of us is in the right let Heaven decide. But I'll tell you what it is, captain, I'll bet you a guinea, and a pint of aquavitae into the bargain, that if none of you lend any assistance to that d—d shabby fellow, he shall not be able to cut off my head in an hour." The captain swore a great oath that no one should interfere, and, laughing aloud, he took my bet. My hands only were bound. I stretched myself upon the snow, and laid my neck flat upon the stump. Finlay threw off his jacket, and raised himself to the stroke. I believe the little wretch thought that he would make my head fly away I do not know how far. I however kept a sharp look out from the corner of my eye, and just as his great stroke was descending, I gave my head a sudden jerk to the one side towards his feet, on which he struck his sword several inches into the solid root of the birch tree. He tugged with all his might, but could in nowise extricate it. I lost not a moment, but, plaiting my legs around his, I raised myself up against his knees, and overthrew him with ease. I had now great need of exertion; for though I was three times as strong and heavy as he, yet my hands being fettered was greatly against me. It happened that, in trying to recover himself as he fell, he alighted with his face downward. I

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threw myself across his neck, and with my whole strength and weight squeezed his face and head down among the snow. The men and women shouted and clapped their hands until all the Grampian forests of Strathaven rang again. I found I now had him safe; for though he exerted himself with all his power, he could only drag himself backward through the snow, and as I kept my position firm, he was obliged to drag me along with him; so that, not being able to get any breath, his strength soon failed him, and in less than five minutes he could do no more than now and then move a limb, like a frog that is crushed beneath a waggon wheel.

None of them, however, offered to release their countryman, until I, thinking that he was clean gone, arose from above him of my own accord. I was saluted by all the women, and many of them clasped me in their arms and kissed me; and the prettiest and best dressed one among them took off my bonds and threw them away, at which the captain seemed nothing offended. I was then conducted back to the inn in triumph, while poor Finlay Bawn Beg Macalister Monro was left lying among the snow, and his sword sticking fast in the stump of the birch tree; and for any thing I know it is sticking there to this day.

I was loaded with little presents, and treated with the best that the village could afford. The captain paid his wager; but before we had done drinking our whisky I got as drunk as a boar, and I fear behaved in a very middling way. I had some indistinct remembrance afterwards of travelling over great hills of snow, and by the side of a frozen lake, and of fighting with some Highlanders, and being dreadfully mauled, but all was like a dream; and the next morning, when I awoke, I found myself lying in a dungeon vault of the castle of Brae-Mar, on a little withered heath, and all over battered with blood, while every bone of my body was aching with pain. I had some terrible days with these confounded

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Farquharsons and Mackintoshes, but I got a round amends of them ere all the play was played; it is a long story, but well worth telling, and if you will have patience—"

"Andrew," said old Margaret, "the supper is waiting; when we have got that an' the prayers by, we'll then hae the story out at our ain leisure; an' Andrew, ye sal hae the best i' the house to your supper the night."

"Gudewife, ye're no just sic a fool as I thought you were," said Andrew; "that's twice i' your life ye hae spoken very good sense. I trow we'll e'en take your advice, for ye ken how the auld sang ends,

"Gin ye be for the cock to craw,
Gie him a nievfu' groats, dearie."

HIGHLAND ADVENTURES.

So wonderous wild the whole might seem,
The scenery of a fairy dream.—SCOTT.

SIR,—As every thing that relates to Loch Ketturin and its environs, that modern classic ground, is become interesting to the public, I have taken the resolution of sending you a short relation of a tour which I made through that district near the latter end of March last; in hopes you will not be displeased at meeting with some account of that romantic and favourite scene, even though by one ill fitted for such a description, and little acquainted with the rules of composition.

I went to Stirling in the mail-coach, and riding to Callander that night, had the peculiar satisfaction of meeting with the old chieftain of M'Nab, whose name had been familiar to me from my infancy; and whom I had always been extremely anxious to see. From the relations that I had heard of his youth-

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ful feats and eccentricities, I expected to find in him a rough imperious old gentleman, who would scarcely condescend to hold social intercourse with any man, far less with an inconsiderable wanderer like me; but I found his manners simple and condescending, and his politeness without any affectation. His inexhaustible store of Highland anecdotes, and his manner of telling them, are extremely amusing. Take him all in all; his form, manner, and character; and to these add the respect that is paid to him in the two villages, where he chiefly resides, he is certainly the finest model of an old Highland feudal baron that will ever again be seen in Scotland. His character evinces a high degree of obliging condescension, and haughty impatience of control, of the gentleness of the lamb and the boldness of a lion.

I took the road up Strathgartney on foot, intending to keep on the south side of the river, until I reached the old bridge a little below Loch Venachar; but observing, from the road, an artificial mound, on the level plain between the two rivers, and a small burial ground enclosed on the top of it, I could not resist the impulse to stem the water, though rough and deep, for the purpose of viewing it; not doubting but that it was the tomb of Roderick Dhu. I was rather disappointed on finding the names of other people recorded on the tomb; but as it was so nigh to the place of rencounter between Fitz-James and Roderick, and knowing that our old heroes were always buried on the fields where they fought, I hoped that the tomb would be first erected to him, and these other people buried in it afterwards.

I cannot help remarking here, that I think the greatest fault attached to the delightful poem of the *Lady of the Lake*, is, its containing no one fact, on which the mind of the enraptured peruser can rest as the basis of a principle so inherent in the human mind, as is the desire of affixing the stamp of reality on such incidents as interest us. The soul of

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man thirsts naturally and ardently for truth; and the author that ceases to deceive us with the appearance of it, ceases in a proportional degree to interest our feelings in behalf of the characters which he describes, or the fortunes of the individuals to which these characters are attached. The stories contained in Mr Walter Scott's other poems, are all fairly without the bounds of probability; yet as they relate to some facts of which we are certain, and there being no proof that the most of the events are not founded on facts, which the bard has been pleased to embellish in his own fanciful and peculiar manner, they have the same pleasing effect upon the mind that is produced by an authentic narrative. But in this poem he never once leaves the enchanting field of probability, yet the mind is forced reluctantly to acknowledge, that it has been pursuing an illusion, and interesting itself in a professed fiction. The *possibility* is not even left of attaching the idea of truth to one event, which might have served as a pivot on which the rest would have turned; with which we would gladly have associated every other circumstance, and acquiesced with delight in the delicious deception. I admire the easy and simple majesty of that sweet tale as much as any person can possibly do; but I have never read it without regretting, that it had not been founded on a fact, though ever so trivial; and though my taste may be particular in this matter, I felt the effect rather distressing to reflection on viewing every scene of action referred to in the poem, which causes me to mention it in this place.

The whole of the scenery around Callander and Strathgartney is interesting, and to the man who has traversed the flat extent of the eastern counties of Britain, where the verge of the horizon is always resting on something level with or below his eye, the frowning brows of Ben-Ledi, (the hill of God,) with the broken outline of the mountains, both to the east and the westward, have a peculiarly pleasing effect. Still

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as you advance, the scenery improves, and in the vicinity of the bridge of Turk, it is highly picturesque, and yields little in variety to the celebrated Trossacks. From the top of Lanrick Mead, the muster place of the Clan-Alpine, which is a small detached hill at the junction of the water of Glen-Finlas with Loch Venachar, the general effect of the view is more noble and better contrasted, than from any other spot I alighted upon in the Strath.

I had here a conversation of considerable length with an old crusty Highlander, with whose remarks I was highly amused. He asked me frankly where I came from? And what my business was in that country? And on my informing him that I was going to take a view of the Trossacks; he said that I was right to do so, else I would not be in the fashion, but it was a sign I was too idle, and had very little to do at home; but that a Mr Scott had put all the people mad by printing a *lying poem* about a man that never existed,—"What the d—— was to be seen about the Trossacks more than in an hundred other places? A few rocks and bushes, nothing else." He gave me the outlines of the story of the Lady of the Lake, with great exactness, and added several improvements of his own. I asked him if there was any truth in it at all; or if it was wholly a fiction? He said, there was once indeed a man who scalked and defended himself in and about Loch-Ketturin; that an old Gaelic song related almost the same story, but that Mr Scott had been quite misled with regard to the names—he was mistaken about them altogether; he translated some parts of the song into English, which were not much illustrative of any story: He, however, persisted in asserting that the stories were fundamentally the same.

He told me further, that Mr Burrel intended to build a bower in the lonely Isle of Loch-Ketturin, in which he meant to place the prettiest girl that could be found in Edinburgh,

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during the summer months, to personate *the Lady of the Lake;* —that she was to be splendidly dressed in the Highland Tartans, and ferry the company over to the island;—that Robert Maclean, a weaver at the bridge of Turk, was to be the goblin of Correi-Uriskin, and had already procured the skin of a monstrous shaggy black goat, which was to form a principal part of his dress while in that capacity;—that, in fact, interest and honour both combined to induce Maclean to turn a goblin this very summer; for in a conversation which he had with two ladies, high in rank, last year, he informed them, with great seriousness, that the goblin actually haunted the den occasionally to this day, at stated periods, and if they were there on such a day, at such an hour, he would forfeit his ears if they did not see him;—they promised to him that they would come, and reward him with a large sum of money if he fulfilled his engagement;—that of course Robert was holding himself in readiness to appear, in case this only surviving brownie, whom they suppose to have been once the king of the whole tribe, should neglect to pay his periodical visit to that lonely seat of his ancient regal court.

After these playful anecdotes, the reader will be a little astonished at hearing, that this man actually believed the tale of the goblin; and that he had visited Correi-Uriskin, not many years ago, at his usual term; in confirmation of which he related the following story:

"A certain man, who was once the *best shot* in the glen, who is still alive, but whose name I have forgot, went out early one day in winter to shoot wild deer on the ledges of Ben-Venue; and, on the skirts of the hill, near by the den of the ghost, he met with an old man, whose face was wrinkled, his eyes red, and his beard as white as snow, leaning and trembling over a staff—he begged of the lad, whom we shall denominate Duncan, to give him something to eat. Duncan said he had brought very little for himself, but he would share

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it with him, and gave him some cakes and cheese. The old stranger accepted of the boon with thankfulness, and assured the hunter that he should not have cause to rue what he had done. Immediately after this, Duncan started a fine stag, fired at him, and wounded him, as he thought, mortally. The stag halted exceedingly; yet notwithstanding every exertion on the part of his pursuer, he always eluded his grasp, though the latter was for the most part quite hard upon him. He loaded and fired nine successive times, without being able to make any farther impression upon the stag. He grew quite fatigued—the sun went down—the winter day was drawing fast to a close;—his prey was neither nearer nor more distant than he was in the morning, though he had followed him many a weary mile;—he stopped to load his gun once more with the last shot that he had remaining, when he beheld the stag fall down quite exhausted;—he hasted up to him, and, wonderful to relate! instead of a stag, he found the identical old man lying, whose necessity he had relieved in the morning! he stood up, and in a menacing mien and voice, addressed him as follows.

"Return, return, Duncan, you have just come far enough; if you come one step further, you shall never return!—mark what I say!—if it had not been for your kindness and beneficence this morning, you should never have seen your friends and family again; but go home, and let the poor remains of my exhausted herd rest in peace; I have but seven now left me in all my wild domain, but these shall never bleed beneath the hand of mortal man." Duncan went home in fear and trembling, and, fond as he was of hunting, has never since that day taken a gun in his hand.

About one o'clock I reached Mr Stuart the guide's house, the name of which I never can either pronounce or spell, and was informed by his mother that he was not at home. I was not in the least sorry on that account, for I wished to lose

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myself in the Trossacks alone; to have no interruption in my contemplations; but to converse only with nature, please myself with wondering at her wildest picture, and wonder why I was pleased.

After having tasted plentifully of old Mrs Stuart's Highland cheer, I set out with a heart bounding with joy, to put my scheme into execution. I traced every ravin and labyrinth that winded around the rocky pyramids; climbed every insulated mass, and thunder-splintered pinnacle, fantastic as the cones of the gathering thunder-cloud, and huge as the ancient pile that was reared on the valley of Shinar. Mr Scott has superseded the possibility of ever more pleasing, by a second description of the Trossacks, but in so doing, he has certainly added to the pleasure arising from a view of them. Whoever goes to survey the Trossacks, let him have the 11th, 12th, and 13th divisions of the first canto of the *Lady of the Lake* in his heart; a little Highland whisky in his head; and then he shall see the most wonderful scene that nature ever produced. If he goes without any of these necessary ingredients, without one verse of poetry in his mind, and "without a drappie in his noddle;" he may as well stay at home; he will see little that will either astonish or delight him, or if it even do the one, will fail of accomplishing the other. The fancy must be aroused, and the imagination and spirits exhilarated, in order that he may enjoy these romantic scenes and groves of wonder with the proper zest. This is no chimera, Sir; I can attest its truth from experience. I once went with a friend to view the Craig of Glen-Whargen in Nithsdale—it was late before we reached it; we were hungry and wearied, having fished all day; it was no rock at all; the Cat-Craig at the back of our house was much more striking;—it was a mere trifle;—we sat down by a well at its base—dined on such provisions as we had,—and, by repeated applications to a bottle full of whisky, emptied it clean out. The rock

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continued to improve; we drank out of the bottle alternately; and in so doing were obliged to hold up our faces towards the rock of Glen-Whargen; it was so grand and sublime, that it was not without an effort we could ever bring our heads back to their natural position. Still as the whisky diminished the rock of Glen-Whargen increased in size and magnificence; and by the time the bottle was empty, we were fixed to the spot in amazement at that stupendous pile; and both of us agreed that it was such a rock as never was looked upon by man.

The most delightful view of the Trossacks is that which is first seen, I mean the one from the highest part of the road leading from the corner of Loch-Achray to the mouth of the pass; and the most wonderful is that from a rock about mid-way between the pass and Beinan, where the whole extent of the Trossacks are seen rising behind one another, like the billows of a stormy ocean.

I went next to the top of a cliff, north of the pass, that I might enjoy a view of the setting sun on Loch-Ketturin.—The evening was calm and serene.—There was not the slightest breeze playing on the surface of the water, nor the smallest speck of vapour floating in the firmament over it. It was indeed a delightful scene, and I would have sent you an excellent description of it, had not Mr Scott previously done it for me. But what astonished and delighted me most of all, was the appearance of Roderick Dhu's barge far west on the lake.

> "Which bearing downwards from Glengyle,
> "Steer'd full upon the lonely isle."

She however weathered it, and bore onward to the base of my castle. As the bark approached, I heard a great number of voices from it joining in a Gaelic song, the effect of which, on the woods and rocks, was truly admirable. I was so tran-

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sported with the singular coincidence, that I waved my hat and shouted aloud, "Roderick Vich Alpine Dhu, ho eiro," while all the crew waved their bonnets and shouted in return. This chief of the mountains was no other than Mr Stuart, with a boatful of the people of Strathgartney, whom he had that day raised to assist him in clearing away some wood west on the banks of the lake. With him I spent the evening, and we were as happy as Highland cheer and Highland whisky could make us.

> One burnish'd sheet of living gold,
> Loch Katrine lay beneath him roll'd;
> In all her length, far winding lay,
> With promontory, creek, and bay,
> And islands that, empurpled bright,
> Floated amid the livelier light;
> And mountains, that like giants stand,
> To centinel enchanted land.
>
> SCOTT.

He entertained me with stories of ancient superstition, and anecdotes of sundry great persons who had visited that scene the preceding summer, with their remarks. Of the observations made by the hereditary Prince of Orange, Mrs Stuart seemed to have treasured up every sentence in her memory; his title had impressed her mind deeply with a sense of his importance. Mr Stuart and I got one jug of toddy after another, until we grew such intimate friends, that we could not be satisfied without testifying it by shaking hands every glass, even though at the risk of spilling a part of our beverage. Next morning I arose very early, and hasted to my favourite eminence, which is nearly straight to the west of Mr Stuart's house, from whence I had a delightful prospect of the sun rising on the lake, which was so calm, that there was not even a dimple on its whole surface. The

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huge bristled bulk of Ben-Venue, whose image, when reflected in the lake, appeared still much larger, while its inverted snowy peak, which seemed as if piercing the centre of the world, had altogether an effect truly grand and totally indescribable.

There was not a breath of wind whispering among the trees; for of green leaves none had yet appeared, save those of the holly and woodbine, but the young downy buds of the hazel were hanging in great abundance; and as my impatience had not suffered me to wait the return of the summer months, I was obliged to supply the foliage in idea.

One blackbird only had found his way to the Trossacks at that early though delightful season, who seemed to have chosen for his choir a cluster of tall birches up nigh to the base of Beinan, from which, both morn and even, he poured his wild melody through the woods and spires around him. A number of small birds were, however, trilling their artless notes, and in order to make up the deficiency as well as possible, robin redbreast placed himself upon the very point of the uppermost twig of the tree, immediately over me;—made himself as big a bird as he possibly could, and sung amazingly sweet; and, on shifting my situation, he also shifted his, and practised upon another tree still nearer to me.

After breakfast, Mr Stuart again accompanied me through the Trossacks, by the Pass, the entrance into which is amazingly picturesque. In the bosom of a rock, south of the Pass, he told me there was a cave, where an outlaw named Fletcher resided many years; but though tradition was so particular with regard to its situation, as to describe minutely the different views which it commanded, he said he had entirely lost the entrance to it; though he had searched for it with the utmost care.

The Gaelic name *Trossacks*, he said, signified the rough

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or shaggy place, which is certainly a term very appropriate. Indeed, the Gaelic names of places are in general so highly descriptive of their various appearances and situations, that, if you tell a Highlander the name of a place, he will almost invariably tell you what it is like; that pass in the Trossacks, however, in former ages, had a designation much more terrible, as the pass in those days would certainly itself appear when the wood was all old. It seems to have been called *the Gate of Hell;* for, Mr Stuart assured me that the name Loch Ketturin literally signified *the Loch of the Gate of Hell.* Correi Uriskin signifies *the Brownie's Clough;* but the description given of the spirit that once inhabited it by the Highlanders, must remind every one of the satyrs of old. The only isle of Loch Ketturin is there called *the Rough Island.* It is a likely place for a last retreat, but there is no appearance of any bower or building of any kind ever having been upon it, and we may safely conclude there never has been any, for the foundation being so solid, the remains of the smallest cot would still have continued visible, if stones had at all been used in the structure. The trees are again grown to a considerable height, and the vacant places are all planted.

The day was uncommonly serene, and even warm; and as we sailed up Loch Ketturin, the wild grandeur of the scenery, as reflected in the still azure lake, greatly delighted me. Our track on the surface of the water had the appearance of an immense gazoon, of which our boat formed the extreme point; and the gentle swell, rolling from her prow, broke the shadows of the mountains into a thousand fantastic shapes.

About mid-way up the lake I went on shore, and after taking leave of Mr Stuart, ascended the mountains to the northward, and in about an hour and a half I reached the top of that range which separates the Glen of Loch Ketturin

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from the braes of Balquhidder. From this height, as the view became more general, the effect of any one place was nearly effaced. The most striking image in the landscape, was the huge cloven mountain of Ben-More, that towered to the firmament immediately over against me, and high as I knew myself then to be by experience, having climbed incessantly for three half hours, I perceived with astonishment that it was nearly as high again. It was completely covered with prodigious masses of snow, and a little dusky cloud hovered above its top, the only one then to be seen. This seemed to be attracted to it by a sort of magnetic power; for it first pointed towards it at a distance, then took a slender hold of its head by which it hung some time over it, as if keeping its hold with difficulty, and finally settled upon its head in the most striking moral form that can be conceived. The mountain so high, so pyramidal, and so white, with the dark gray crown upon its head, placed there as it were by the hand of Heaven, and descending from the skies in my view, formed, on the whole, such a picture of sublimity as I never before looked upon; and I could not help saying to myself, "robed in the most incontestable insignia of royalty, there stands the king of the Grampians." As the wreathes of snow on the dark sides of the hills were extremely hard, it was not without difficulty that I descended into the valley of Balquhidder. I spent the remainder of that day and the next morning in taking a view of the glen, and slept at a farmer's house.

The braes of Balquhidder form an extent of rich succulent pasture, and are in general green to the very tops. It has the appearance of being a fine pasturing district; but the sheep are said to be subject to many diseases, although they feed exceedingly well. The valley is of considerable extent, and almost a dead level; in consequence of which, it is subjected to frequent inundations by the swelling back of the lakes; for in

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violent rains and thaws, the torrents pour from the mountains so rapidly, and in such abundance, and the declivity of the valley being so inconsiderable, it becomes as one continued lake. There are two extensive and fine fishing lochs in it, Loch Doine and Loch Voil, signifying the deep Loch, and the shallow Loch. This glen is the northern limits of the country, which Mr Scott gives to the Clan-Alpin, and in bringing the fiery cross back from it he commits a simple geographical mistake, by making it come again, "down Strath-Gartney's valley broad," the very track which my kinsman Malise, and young Angus had before traversed.

About an hour before noon, I took leave of my hospitable entertainers, and, without informing any one of my designs, for fear of opposition, I again ascended the mountains to the northward, resolved, if possible, to reach the top of Ben-More. It being in the heat of the day, which was extremely fine, and the sun having softened the snow somewhat, I reached its top without much difficulty, but not without great fatigue; if it had not been for some Highland cakes, cheese, and whisky, which I was easily persuaded to take along with me, I had certainly failed altogether. I however reached the summit of the hill, and of my wishes for the present, where the first thing I did was to drink to his Majesty's health, at the same time declaring aloud, as there was no human being to hear me, that I would by no means change situations with him, for that his station in life was extremely low in comparison with that I now occupied.

I believe it is generally allowed, that the depression or elevation of a man's mind is in a great measure conformable to the disposition of his bodily frame; if this holds good in all cases, it is evident that nothing can contribute so much to the elevation of his sentiments, as placing him on the top of a very high hill. I think this might be demonstratively proved, for, if we consider that the body is the seat or throne of

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the mind; that while in this state of existence they cannot subsist asunder; of course, where the body is there must the mind be also; will any man then venture to deny that mind to be elevated which is 4000 feet above the level of the sea.

This is only a specimen of Forum reasoning, no one must mind it, but try if he can for a moment conceive the sublimity of my situation. Conceive a self-important bard sitting in a state of the highest exultation, on the uppermost pinnacle of the lofty and majestic Ben-More, whose temples he had, the evening before, seen so solemnly encircled with the emblems of royalty—above huge masses of eternal snow; above the habitations of the fox and the eagle—above the cares (and I wish he could say the vanities) of this world. Looking on the western ocean and isles, the whole range of the Grampian hills, those stupendous pyramids of nature, and all the south of Scotland spread around him as on a map; while the finest lakes of the country were lying stretched at rest in their respective vallies, almost immediately below his feet.

The scene was indeed such a one as no imagination can paint with justice; and what it wanted in softness and verdure, on account of the early season of the year, it gained in grandeur, by the pure unsullied robes of snow that enveloped all the mountains from a certain height upwards.

This was certainly a good criterion for judging of the comparative heights of these hills, for none of that was new fallen snow, but that which had been amassed during the winter, and had stood the test of several regular thaws, one of them the greatest that had been witnessed in that country during the present age; yet, above a certain height it had taken no visible effect, farther than stiffening the snow on the return of frost. Ben-Lawers, that rises from the north shore of Loch Tay, is by all geographers accounted the highest hill in that bounds; but this is not at all the idea of the inhabitants of the country, whose opinion I account of some weight. They

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are uniformly of opinion that Ben-More is the highest, Ben-Leo, that rises between Strath-fillan and Glen-Orchey, the second, and Ben-Lawers, only the third. I dare not affirm that this is actually the case, but appearances were at this time rather in favour of the theory; perhaps the people around the base of the latter may think differently.

I cannot help mentioning here a circumstance, of the truth of which I have long been convinced; it is, that the highest mountains in Scotland, without exception, are some that are situated in the eastern division of the Grampian range, and which, as far as I know, no geographer or tourist has ever mentioned. I do not know the particular names which distinguish each of them, but they rise between the sources of the Dee, the Gairn, the Avin, and Glen-More. Cairn-Gorum is always allowed to be next to Ben-Nevis in height; but there are some to the south-west of it that appear to be much higher, the altitudes of which have never been taken;* I have crossed these mountains both at mid-summer and in April; a great extent of country in that quarter is a complete desert, where no human habitation is to be seen, nor human voice heard for three quarters of the year. Glen-Avin, which belongs to the Duke of Gordon, is nearly twenty miles in length, yet, I dare say, it is not known to above ten persons alive. It is a scene of the most gloomy grandeur, and well calculated to inspire notions of ideal beings, of terror and superstition, which are ascribed by the Highlander to its lonely dells. In its bottom is a fine lake at least ten miles in length, the surface of which is on an elevation of 1700 feet above the level of the sea; yet the mountains around it appear as high from their bases as any other in Scotland; though

* Since the writing of this, the height of these mountains have been measured by Dr Skene, and the highest, Ben-Macdui, found to be 15 feet lower than Ben-Nevis.

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this is impossible, yet I conceive some of these mountains to be the highest in the kingdom.

I remained in this exalted station as long as the chillness of the atmosphere of that region would suffer me, and I flattered myself that I was in reality as much delighted with the country as any of those could be to whom it belonged; and as a proof of my supposition, concluded that none of them would have climbed Ben-More at such a season to get a view of it. I then began, not without considerable trepidation, to descend, keeping the south-east corner of the hill, the north side being all like a smooth sheet of ice. I soon discovered that the task of getting down from the hill was likely to be a much more arduous one than that of ascending it, for I was obliged to take such short steps, and before I could take them at all, had often to dig holes with my staff wherein to set my feet; so that after toiling an hour, I saw that I had not proceeded a quarter of a mile, I however felt no cold by that time; on the contrary, I never was warmer in my life. At length the steepest part of the hill seemed to be got over; all was white and smooth before me, and I determined to slide down the surface of the snow on my feet, judging myself to be exceedingly adroit in such achievements. The glaring whiteness had, however, deceived me. The hill turned out to be much more steep than I had conceived it to be. For some time I glided on, swiftly indeed, but with great ease; but at length I began to fly with such velocity, that my eyes fell a watering, and I entirely lost sight of my course. In my hurry, not knowing well what to do, I made a sudden lean backward on my staff; in doing which, my feet being posting on at such a rate, went faster than I could follow them, I lost my equilibrium, fell on my back, and darted down the side of Ben-More,

"As ever ye saw the rain down fa',
Or yet the arrow gae frae the bow."

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My staff, of which I lost the hold when I fell, quite outrun me; my clean shirt, which was tied neatly up in a red handkerchief, came hopping down the hill, sometimes behind and sometimes before me, but my hat took a direction quite different. I struck the snow desperately with my heels, in hopes to stop my career, but all was to no purpose, until I came to a flat shelving part of the hill, where I lay still at once, without being a farthing the worse. The first thing that I did was to raise my eyes towards the top of Ben-More, and was astonished at the distance I had come. As nearly as I could calculate, I had travelled post in that manner upwards of a mile in little more than a quarter of a minute. I indulged in a hearty laugh at my manner of journeying; with some difficulty picked up my scattered travelling accoutrements; and, proceeding on my way, reached Bovain in Glen-Dochart, the house of Robert M'Nab, Esq. about eleven o'clock at night.

I spent two weeks in that house and its neighbourhood, but never mentioned my adventures on Ben-More to any one, for fear of being laughed at. I viewed all the varied scenery of Breadalbine, traced all its rivers to their sources, and climbed all the mountains that commanded the most extensive or interesting views of the country, and at length returned to the south by the way of Loch-Earn-head and the pass of Lenny. I would have sent you descriptions of these districts through which I travelled, but I am afraid that I have already drawn out this letter to a ridiculous length.

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HALBERT OF LYNE.

So thou'lt not read my Tales, thou say'st Horatio,
" Because, forsooth, such characters as those
That I have chosen should ne'er be defined,
For when they are,—where's the epitome,
The moral or conclusion? What may man
Profit or learn by studying such as these?"

Wo worth thy shallow, thy insidious wit,
Thy surface-skimming lore, Horatio!
Thou'rt a mere title-page philosopher,
A thing of froth and vapour, formed of all
The unsubstantialities of nature,
Nourished by concourse of the elements;
A man of woman born, of woman bred,
Of woman's mind, frame, fashion, and discourse,
A male Blue-stocking!—Out upon thee, girl!
Nay, do not fume nor wince; for, on my soul,
Let but thy barber smooth thy whiskered cheek,
With sterile but well-nourished crop besprent,
Scythe thy mustachio, and, by this true hand,
I'll hire thee for a nurse, Horatio.

Dost thou not know, presuming as thou art,
That purest gold in smallest veins is found,
And with most rubbish mixed, which thou must sift,
And sorely dig for?—Treasures of the deep,
The mine, the vale, the mountain—heaven itself,

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Man needs must toil for, else he cannot win.
And wilt thou still be fashion's minion,
Reading alone what fashion warrants thee,
The calendar of women?—Wilt thou never
Learn for thyself to judge, and turn thine eye
Into that page of life, the human soul,
With all its rays, shades, and dependencies,
For ever varied, and for ever new?

O if thou dost, be this thy axiom,
Not to despise the slightest, most minute
Of all its shades and utterings, if they flow
Warm from the heart but cherish such in thine;
The day may come thou may'st think otherwise
Than thou dost now. Ah, hast thou never seen,
The kindly flush and genial glow of spring,
And summer's flower nipt by the biting blast
Of chill unhealthful gale? Yes, oft thou hast;
And could'st thou see as well into this breast,
And note the toil and warfare there maintained
By the fond weary sojourner within,
That pours this lay, its only anodyne!
Thou could'st not chuse but listen,—it is not
Thy nature to despise my rural lay.

I would be friends with thee, Horatio,
For I have weaknesses, and foibles too,
Worse than thine own, and heavier far to bear!
Then say not thou, by desk or counter placed,
Or haply on the gilded sofa set,
By board of drawing-room, while some fair dame
Stretches her lily hand, with careless mien,
To seize my little book—O say not thou,
"This is our friend again; poor man! he is

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For ever publishing, and still the same,
The fairy's raide, the witch's embassy,
The spirit's voice, the mountain and the mist."
Spare the injurious speech—dost thou not see
That beauteous smirk, and that half-lifted eye,
How they bespeak the comely vacancy,
The void of soul within? Yet that same dame
Leads and misleads one half of all the town.
Dost thou not know, Horatio, that one word,
The first word critical that is pronounced
On any trembling author's valued work,
Nay the first syllable, is like a spark
Set to the mountain, that will flame and spread
Even when the breezes rest; working its way,
And none can certify where it may end?
Beware then how thou kindlest such a flame,
To sear a soul and genius in the bloom!

Far rather say—for 'tis as easy said,
And haply nigher true—"Madam, I have
Perused that work, and needs must own to you,
I deemed my time well spent—read it throughout,
Thou wilt not rue it." This were friendlier far,
And more becoming thee; but it is not
Thy cherished principle, for thou wilt talk
Of egotism, and drawing from one's self;
Chatter of mind, and nerve, and the effect
Of constitution, till the matrons yawn,
And green girls stare at thee—for shame, Horatio;

Of "Egotism and drawing from one's self!"
Does this befit thee?—I have heard thee talk
Three hours and thirty minutes by the clock
Of old Saint Giles, and ever of thyself!

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Thyself and thine.—Yet thou wilt carp at me,
And say that I draw only from myself!
Well, be it so; he who draws otherwise
Than from his feelings, never shall draw true.
I know my faults, Horatio, and can laugh
At them and thee, as thou shalt see anon.
Read thou the tale before thee—if it please
Not thee I care not; but I pledge my word
My next shall please thee worse: I have a mark,
Will better suit—for it shall be of thee.

There was a time, Horatio—but 'tis gone,
Would that we saw't again—when every hind
Of Scotland's southern dales tilled his own field;
When master, dame and maid, servant and son,
At the same board ate of the same plain meal.
The health and happiness of that repast
Made every meal a feast.—In these good days
Of might and hardihood, there lived a man,
A wealthy, worthy, and right honest hind,
Hight John of Manor. He had ewes and lambs,
Kids and he-goats, more than he well could number,
Besides good breeding mares and playful colts,
Heifers and lazy bullocks, many a one.
But John had that which better fits the song
Of rhyming bard and thee, Horatio,
Than kid or lamb, colt or unwieldy ox;
He had five daughters, all of them as fair
As roses in their prime: beshrew that heart
That would not leap and warm at such a sight
As John of Manor's daughters!—At that time
There lived in Lyne a shrewd discerning dame,
Who had an only son, Halbert his name.

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One day she drew her chair close to the light,
For, ah! her seam was fine, and it was white
As the pure snow, while by her side reclined
Her darling son, just resting from his work.
His ruddy cheek was leant upon his hand,
His eyes fixed on the wall, in careless wise,
And all the while he was full earnestly
Whistling a tune, as if it did import
Greatly to him the masterly performance.

"Thou never dost remark," said the good dame,
And as she spoke she turned her prying eye
Right o'er the spectacles to look at Hab:
The eyes of glass were still upon the seam,
But the true eye peeped over them; it was
A mother's eye, aye fraught with kind concern
When turned on her own offspring.—"Look thou here,
Thou careless thing—thou never dost remark
What beauteous linen I have bought this year
For my good son; but, trow me, it has cost
Thy mother a round sum; yet though it has,
I have a meaning in't which bodes thee well.—
List me, my son. What whillilu is that
Thou keep'st a trilling at?"—Halbert went on
Straight with his tune, there was a fall in it
He could not lose.—"List what I say, my son.
I'm wearing old and frail, and by the course
Of nature soon must leave thee: we have lived
Full happily and well, but slow decay
Steals on with silent foot, and we must part."

"Hush, hush," said Halbert, "talk not of that theme
For many years to come. I'd rather part
With all I have on earth than my dear mother."

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She took her spectacles, and wiped them clean,
For a warm tear had dimmed her aged eye,
Then went she on with theme she dearly loved,
Lauding her filial son, who by that time
Had made recovery of his favourite air
On a sweet minor key, and poured it forth,
Soft and delightful as a flageolet.
"When I have sewed this sleeve my work is done,
And thou shalt go a-wooing in this shirt;
And, trust me, thou shalt not its marrow meet
In all the lands of Lyne, March, and Montgomery,
So fine, and yet so fair."—Halbert went on
Sheer with his tune; it was a lay of love,
An old and plaintive thing, and strangely was
Blent with some nameless feelings of delight,
Which Halbert keenly felt, but little knew
How to account for.—"List to me, my son:
Fain would I see thee settled rationally
In life as thee becomes, and fairly joined
To virtuous daughter of an honest man.
My old acquaintance, John of Manor, has
Five winsome daughters—there is not in all
The bounds of Scotland five such lovely maids
As John of Manor's daughters—and he is
A man of wealth, which these fair maids must heir,
For son he hath not. Would you go, my son,
And choose a wife from Manor, it would glad
The heart of your old mother. There is Ann,
The eldest born, who likely will share most
Of his wide wealth—O such a wife, my son,
As Ann of Manor, would become your house,
Your table head, your right-hand at the church,
And when the cold long nights of winter come——

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This last description Halbert could not stand;
He gave his tune quite up, which of itself,
Long ere that time had nearly died away;
He sighed, gave a short yawn, and, rising up,
Looked at the linen, praised its snowy hue
And beauteous texture, some inquiry made
What time it would be ready for the wear,
Then sat he down again to hear some more
Of lovely Ann of Manor.—" Ah! my son,
She is not one of the light-headed herd,
These gewgaw, giddy-paced, green-sickly girls,
That mind nought but their gaudery and their glee;
Poor thriftless, shiftless, syrup-lipped shreds,
That take men in to ruin. No, she is
A sound man's child, an honest woman born,
And bred up in the paths of decency
And fear of Heaven; and then she is so fair,
So fresh and lovely! and as sweet, my son,
As field of new-won hay."—Halbert arose,
Drew a long breath, stretched up his boardly frame
In guise of anxious solicitude,
Looked at the shirt again, and went away.

That day he thought of Ann, he sung of Ann,
He whistled the sweet air of *Bonny Ann*
Along the hay-field, and when came the night,
He lay and dreamed of lovely Ann of Manor.

Next morning Halbert found when he awoke
A fair new shirt, white as the lily's breast,
Well aired and plaited with neat careful hand,

† Some lines wanting here.

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At his bed-head; proudly he put it on,
And in his heart he blest the kindred love
That had prepared it so while others slept.

Hab went away with ardent anxious breast
Across the moor to Manor—as he went,
He coned his deep-laid schemes of policy.
I am resolved, said Halbert to himself,
If these fair maidens please me, that I will
Be frank and generous—I'll not sue for dower,
For flock or herd, gelding, or sullen ox.
I'll win their favour well, and then I'll trust
To fortune for the rest—With the good-man
I'll talk of farming and the service work;
Of the improven breeds of sheep and wool;
Of crops and servants, and the foolish risk
Of selling aught on credit, till he say,
When I walk out, "He's a shrewd fellow Hab,
One who knows more than many thrice his age;
Wife, give us of the best the house affords
At dinner-time—you, wenches, get you gone,
Put your new kirtles on, and make you clean;
Hab is the son of an old worthy friend,
I love him for his parents' sake as well
As for his own—He's a shrewd fellow Hab!"

"Then, when a chance occurs, I'll talk apart
With the old dame of prudence and of thrift,
The vices and the follies of the age;
I'll talk of sins, of sermons, and of faith,
Of Boston, and Ralph Erskine, and renounce
The slightest atom of dependency
Upon my own good works.—"Ah!" she will say,
"He is a sensible good Christian lad

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That Halbert! one who minds the thing that's good!"
Then will she look in her loved daughter's face
With wistful eye, and with a sigh exclaim,
"What pity should he throw himself away
On some light worthless jilflirt!—Ah! he is
A sensible good Christian lad that Halbert!"

"But then the maid, how shall I deal with her?
There lies the difficulty, should they not
Once leave us by ourselves—I never can
Ask her in public with as formal face
As I would buy a heifer or a mare.
No, by ourselves we needs must be; and then
O how I'll press, teaze, flatter, and caress her!
I'll clasp her waist, and kiss her comely cheek,
Steal by degrees to her soft moistened lip—
The sharp reproof will quickly grow more mild
Until it melt away—then will I sigh,
And say that it was cruel in th' extreme
To grant so sweet a kiss—for how can man
That has enjoyed it ever more be happy,
Or live without the owner of such kiss!
Then she'll say to herself, as I do now,
"I like that Hab—he hath some spirit Hab."

By this time Hab had so wound up his thoughts
With visions of delight, that he had quitted
His common pace, and ran across the moor
Without perceiving it, while shepherds stood
And gazed afar with wonder—dreading sore
That Halbert was distraught, or something wrong
With the good folks of Lyne. He came at last
To the hall-door of Manor with a breast
Beating full hard, and little wist he then

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What he should say.—Forth came the old goodman
With his white hosen and his broad blue bonnet;
Stout and well-framed he was, but in his eye
Lurk'd a discernment Halbert scarce could brook.

After good-morrow, question, and reply,
With downcast look Hab thus his errand said:
"I'm come in search of a much valued ewe
Which I have lost, and she, it seems, was seen
Coming this way—a beautiful young ewe,
One which I may not and I must not lose."
"What are her marks and whither did she come?
"She came from Lyne." "Ah, do I see the son
Of my old valued friend? Welcome, good youth;
I saw not your lost sheep, but all my flock
I'll put before you; if you find her not,
Chuse one from mine and welcome; you may find
Some ewes as young, as beautiful, and good,
As any bred on Lyne."—Halbert look'd down,
Full sore abash'd, but made as fit reply
As he well could.—"My girls are out," said John,
"Milking the ewes, they will be here anon,
And they perchance may give you some account
Of your lost ewe. 'Tis hard that a young man
Should lose his ewe—meanwhile let us go in,
See the goodwife, and taste her morning cheer."

Good ewe-milk whey, thick as the curdled breast
Of cauliflower, brose, butter, bread and cheese,
Furnish'd the breakfast board of John of Manor.
Hard did he press his youthful guest to all,
Whose high resolves had faded into smoke.
He talked not of religion, nor the mode
Of farming to advantage, for old John

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Failed not at every interval to hint,
With sly demeanour, something of his ewe.
" Who's that," said Halbert, " coming from the bught
With the five maids?"—" I know not," John replied;
" He seems a stranger,—some young man perchance
Seeking a ewe. O these same ewes, my friend,
Are a precarious stock,—they go astray,
And will not stay with one, do as he will."

At length the maidens, decked all neat and clean,
Entered the little parlour one by one.
Ann was not tall, but lively and discreet,
And comely as a cherub,—Halbert weened
No woman ever born so beautiful
As Ann of Manor.—But when entered Jane,
Of fair delicious form, round pouting lips,
Cheeks like the damask rose, and liquid eye
That spoke unutterable things, her locks,
Fair as the morning, waving round her brow,
Like light clouds curling o'er the rising sun,
Or, if you please, the mist-wreaths pale, Horatio.
Soon Halbert saw that all the world beside
Could never once compare with beauteous Jane.
Then came the third, young Douglas, with an eye
Dark and majestic as the eagle's, when
She looks down from the cliff.—Her form was tall,
Slender, and elegant, while from her tongue
Flowed such a spirit of melodious breath,
That thrilled the hearer,—not alone they seemed
The language of the soul, her tones and words
Were very soul itself. Halbert was fixed—
Confirmed in this, that never mortal man,
Nor angel, had beheld a female form,
A face, an eye, nor listened to a voice

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Like that of lovely Douglas—Mary came,
The modest, diffident, and blushing Mary.
The mild blue eye, the joy of innocence
Beaming through every smile!—O Halbert's heart
Was wholly overpowered; till Barbara came,
The youngest and the loveliest of them all.

Halbert went home,—he went without his ewe,
And heart to boot,—that heart was lost for ever,
To whom he knew not! in the family
That heart had lingered, he wist not with whom.
Such grace, such purity of form and mind,
Appeared in all, Halbert was on the rack.
He took to bed, but sleep had flown from thence;
He thought of Ann, and sighed a prayer to Heaven;
Of young and blooming Barbara, and the smile
That shed a radiance o'er the maiden blush
Of gentle Mary; then a burning tear,
A tear of sympathy, crept o'er his cheek.
He thought of Jane, and turned him in his bed;
He thought of Douglas, and turned back again.

Day follow'd day, and week came after week,
Years past away, and Halbert all the while
Was wooing hard at Manor—sometimes one,
Sometimes another, as blind chance decreed;
Each of them was so good, so beautiful,
So far surpassing all of womankind,
That time, nor chance, nor reason, e'er could frame
A choice determinate; till at the last
Old Manor, in a kind but earnest way,
Inquiry made what his intentions were
That thus he haunted his fair family.

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"Sooth, my good friend," said Halbert, "ne'er was man
On earth so hard beset—I love them all
With such a pure esteem and stainless love,
That though I well could give the preference
To any one, yet for my life and soul
There is not one of them I can reject.
I give the matter wholly up to you,
I know you wish me well, and all the maids
Alike to you are dear,—Whom shall I choose?

John set his bonnet in becoming mode,
That well betoken'd deep considerate thought;
One edge of it directed middle way
'Twixt the horizon and the cope of heaven,
And with the one hand in his bosom sheathed,
The other heaving slightly in the air,
To humour what he said, he utter'd words
Which I desire you note—"My son," said he,
"I've one advice to give you, which through life
I rede you follow—when you make a choice
Of man or woman, beast, farm, fish, or fowl,
CHOOSE EVER THAT WHICH HAS THE FEWEST FAULTS.
My girls have all their foibles and their faults—
Mary's are FEWEST AND LEAST DANGEROUS.
Take thou my Mary—if she prove to thee
As good a wife as she has ever been
A dutiful and loving child to me,
Thou never wilt repent it."—So it proved;
A happier pair ne'er travell'd through this vale
Of life together, than our Halbert
With his beloved Mary.—Peace to them,
And to their ashes!—and may every pair
Of happy lovers in their kindred dale
Cherish their memory, and be blest as they!

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Now, dear Horatio, when thou makest choice
Of book, of friend, companion, or of wife,
Think of the sage advice of John of Manor;
CHOOSE EVER THAT WHICH HAS THE FEWEST FAULTS,
AND THOSE LEAST DANGEROUS.—Take note of this:

All have their faults and foibles—all have too
The feelings that congenial minds will love;
And to each other genial minds will cling
Long as this world has being, and the shades
Of nature hold their endless variation.
I say no more, Horatio, but this word:
In time to come, when thronged variety
Of books, and men, and women, on thee crowd,
When choice distracts thee, or when spleen misleads,
Think of the sage advice of John of Manor.

THE LONG PACK.

IN the year 1723, Colonel Ridley returned from India, with what, in those days, was accounted an immense fortune, and retired to a country seat on the banks of North Tyne in Northumberland. The house was rebuilt and furnished with every thing elegant and costly; and amongst others, a service of plate supposed to be worth £1000. He went to London annually with his family, during a few of the winter months, and at these times there were but few left at his country house. At the time we treat of, there were only three domestics remained there; a maid servant, whose name was Alice, kept the house, and there were besides, an old man and a boy, the one threshed the corn, and the other took

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care of some cattle; for the two ploughmen were boarded in houses of their own.

One afternoon, as Alice was sitting spinning some yarn for a pair of stockings to herself, a pedlar entered the hall with a comical pack on his back. Alice had seen as long a pack, and as broad a pack; but a pack equally long, broad, and thick, she declared she never saw. It was about the middle of winter, when the days were short, and the nights cold, long, and wearisome. The pedlar was a handsome, well-dressed man, and very likely to be a very agreeable companion for such a maid as Alice, on such a night as that; yet Alice declared, that from the very first she did not like him greatly, and though he introduced himself with a little ribaldry, and a great deal of flattery interlarded, yet when he came to ask a night's lodging, he met with a peremptory refusal; he jested on the subject, said he believed she was in the right, for that it would scarcely be safe to trust him under the same roof with such a sweet and beautiful creature—Alice was an old maid, and any thing but beautiful—He then took her on his knee, caressed and kissed her, but all would not do. "No, she would not consent to his staying there." "But are you really going to put me away to night?" "Yes." "Indeed, my dear girl, you must not be so unreasonable; I am come straight from Newcastle, where I have been purchasing a fresh stock of goods, which are so heavy, that I cannot travel far with them, and as the people around are all of the poorer sort, I will rather make you a present of the finest shawl in my pack before I go further." At the mentioning of the shawl, the picture of deliberation was pourtrayed in lively colours on Alice's face for a little; but her prudence overcame. "No, she was but a servant, and had orders to harbour no person about the house but such as came on business, nor these either, unless she was well acquainted with them." "What the worse can you, or your master, or any one else be, of suffering me to

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tarry until the morning?" "I entreat you do not insist, for here you cannot be." "But, indeed, I am not able to carry my goods further to-night." "Then you must leave them, or get a horse to carry them away." "Of all the sweet inflexible beings that ever were made, you certainly are the chief. But I cannot blame you; your resolution is just and right. Well, well, since no better may be, I must leave them, and go search for lodgings myself somewhere else, for, fatigued as I am, it is as much as my life is worth to endeavour carrying them further." Alice was rather taken at her word: she wanted nothing to do with his goods: the man was displeased at her, and might accuse her of stealing some of them; but it was an alternative she had proposed, and against which she could start no plausible objection; so she consented, though with much reluctance. "But the pack will be better out of your way," said he, "and safer, if you will be so kind as lock it by in some room or closet." She then led him into a low parlour, where he placed it carefully on two chairs, and went his way, wishing Alice a good night.

When old Alice and the pack were left together in the large house by themselves, she felt a kind of undefined terror come over her mind about it. "What can be in it," said she to herself, "that makes it so heavy? Surely when the man carried it this length, he might have carried it farther too—It is a confoundedly queer pack; I'll go and look at it once again, and see what I think is in it; and suppose I should handle it all around, I may then perhaps have a good guess what is in it."

Alice went cautiously and fearfully into the parlour and opened a wall-press—she wanted nothing in the press, indeed she never looked into it, for her eyes were fixed on the pack, and the longer she looked at it, she liked it the worse; and as to handling it, she would not have touched it for all that it contained. She came again into the kitchen and conversed

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with herself. She thought of the man's earnestness to leave it—of its monstrous shape, and every circumstance connected with it—They were all mysterious, and she was convinced in her own mind, that there was something *uncanny*, if not unearthly, in the pack.

What surmises will not fear give rise to in the mind of a woman! She lighted a moulded candle, and went again into the parlour, closed the window shutters, and barred them; but before she came out, she set herself upright, held in her breath, and took another steady and scrutinizing look of the pack. God of mercy! She saw it moving, as visibly as she ever saw any thing in her life. Every hair on her head stood upright. Every inch of flesh on her body crept like a nest of pismires. She hasted into the kitchen as fast as she could, for her knees bent under the terror that had overwhelmed the heart of poor Alice. She puffed out the candle, lighted it again, and, not being able to find a candlestick, though a dozen stood on the shelf in the fore kitchen, she set it in a water-jug, and ran out to the barn for old Richard. "Oh Richard! Oh, for mercy, Richard, make haste, and come into the house. Come away Richard." "Why, what is the matter Alice? what is wrong?" "Oh, Richard! a pedlar came into the hall entreating for lodgings. Well, I would not let him stay on any account, and, behold, he is gone off and left his pack." "And what is the great matter in that?" said Richard. "I will wager a penny he will look after it, before it shall look after him." "But, oh Richard, I tremble to tell you! We are all gone, for it is a living pack." "A living pack!" Said Richard, staring at Alice, and letting his chops fall down. Richard had just lifted his flail over his head to begin threshing a sheaf; but when he heard of a living pack, he dropped one end of the hand-staff to the floor, and, leaning on the other, took such a look at Alice. He knew long before that Alice was beautiful; he knew that ten years before, but he never

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took such a look at her in his life. "A living pack!" said Richard. "Why, the woman is mad, without all doubt." "Oh, Richard! come away. Heaven knows what is in it! but I saw it moving as plainly as I see you at present. Make haste, and come away Richard." Richard did not stand to expostulate any longer, nor even to put on his coat, but followed Alice into the house, assuring her by the way, that it was nothing but a whim, and of a piece with many of her phantasies. "But," added he, "of all the foolish ideas that ever possessed your brain, this is the most unfeasible, unnatural, and impossible. How can a pack, made up of napkins, and muslins, and corduroy breeches, perhaps, ever become alive? It is even worse than to suppose a horse's hair will turn an eel." So saying, he lifted the candle out of the jug, and, turning about, never stopped till he had his hand upon the pack. He felt the deals that surrounded its edges to prevent the goods being rumpled and spoiled by carrying, the cords that bound it, and the canvass in which it was wrapped. "The pack was well enough, he found nought about it that other packs wanted. It was just like other packs made up of the same stuff. He saw nought that ailed it. And a good large pack it was. It would cost the honest man £200, if not more. It would cost him £300 or £350 if the goods were fine. But he would make it all up again by cheating fools, like Alice, with his gewgaws." Alice testified some little disappointment at seeing Richard unconvinced, even by ocular proof. She wished she had never seen him or it howsomever; for she was convinced there was something mysterious about it; that they were stolen goods, or something that way; and she was terrified to stay in the house with it. But Richard assured her the pack was a right enough pack.

During this conversation in comes Edward: He was a lad about sixteen years of age, son to a coal-driver on the Border—was possessed of a good deal of humour and ingenuity,

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but somewhat roguish, forward, and commonly very ragged, in his apparel. He was about this time wholly intent on shooting the crows and birds of various kinds, that alighted in whole flocks where he foddered the cattle. He had bought a huge old military gun, which he denominated *Copenhagen*, and was continually thundering away at them. He seldom killed any, if ever; but he once or twice knocked off a few feathers, and, after much narrow inspection, discovered some drops of blood on the snow. He was at this very moment come, in a great haste, for *Copenhagen*, having seen a glorious chance of sparrows, and a Robin-red-breast among them, feeding on the site of a corn rick, but hearing them talk of something mysterious, and a living pack, he pricked up his ears, and was all attention. "Faith, Alice," said he, "if you will let me, I'll shoot it." "Hold your peace, you fool," said Richard. Edward took the candle from Richard, who still held it in his hand, and, gliding down the passage, edged up the parlour door, and watched the pack attentively for about two minutes. He then came back with a spring, and with looks very different from those which regulated his features as he went down. As sure as he had death to meet with he saw it stirring. "Hold your peace, you fool," said Richard. Edward swore again that he saw it stirring; but whether he really thought so, or only said so, is heard to determine. "Faith, Alice," said he again, "if you will let me, I'll shoot it." "I tell you to hold your peace, you fool," said Richard. "No," said Edward, "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety; and I will maintain this to be our safest plan. Our master's house is consigned to our care, and the wealth that it contains may tempt some people to use stratagems. Now, if we open up this man's pack, he may pursue us for damages to any amount, but if I shoot it what amends can he get of me? If there is any thing that should not be there, Lord, how I will pepper it! And if it is lawful goods, he can only make me pay

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for the few that are damaged, which I will get at valuation; so, if none of you will acquiesce, I will take all the blame upon myself, and ware a shot upon it. Richard said, whatever was the consequence he would be blameless. A half delirious smile rather distorted than beautified Alice's pretty face, but Edward took it for an assent to what he had been advancing; so, snatching up *Copenhagen* in one hand, and the candle in the other, he hasted down the passage, and, without hesitating one moment, fired at the pack. Gracious Heaven! The blood gushed out upon the floor like a torrent, and a hideous roar, followed by the groans of death, issued from the pack. Edward dropped *Copenhagen* upon the ground, and ran into the kitchen like one distracted. The kitchen was darkish, for he had left the candle in the parlour; so, taking to the door, without being able to utter a word, he ran to the hills like a wild roe, looking over each shoulder, as fast as he could turn his head from the one side to the other. Alice followed as fast as she could, but lost half the way of Edward. She was all the way sighing and crying most pitifully. Old Richard stood for a short space rather in a state of petrifaction, but, at length, after some hasty ejaculations, he went into the parlour. The whole floor flowed with blood. The pack had thrown itself on the ground; but the groans and cries were ceased, and only a kind of guttural noise was heard from it. Knowing that then something must be done, he ran after his companions, and called on them to come back. Though Edward had escaped a good way, and was still persevering on, yet, as he never took long time to consider of the utility of any thing, but acted from immediate impulse, he turned, and came as fast back as he had gone away. Alice also came homeward, but more slowly, and crying even more bitterly than before. Edward overtook her, and was holding on his course; but as he passed, she turned away her face, and called him a murderer. At the sound of this epithet, Ed-

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ward made a dead pause, and looked at Alice with a face much longer than it used to be. He drew in his breath twice, as if going to speak, but he only swallowed a great mouthful of air, and held his peace.

They were soon all three in the parlour, and in no little terror and agitation of mind unloosed the pack, the principal commodity of which was a stout young man, whom Edward had shot through the heart, and thus bereaved of existence in a few minutes. To paint the feelings, or even the appearance of young Edward, during this scene, is impossible; he acted little, spoke less, and appeared in a hopeless stupor; the most of his employment consisted in gulping down mouthfuls of breath, wiping his eyes, and staring at his associates.

It is most generally believed, that when Edward fired at the pack, he had not the most distant idea of shooting a man; but seeing Alice so jealous of it, he thought the Colonel would approve of his intrepidity, and protect him from being wronged by the pedlar; and besides, he had never got a chance of a shot at such a large thing in his life, and was curious to see how many folds of the pedlar's fine haberdashery ware *Copenhagen* would drive the drops through; so that, when the stream of blood burst from the pack, accompanied with the dying groans of a human being, Edward was certainly taken by surprise, and quite confounded; he indeed asserted, as long as he lived, that he saw something stirring in the pack, but his eagerness to shoot, and his terror on seeing what he had done, which was no more than what he might have expected, had he been certain he saw the pack moving, makes this asseveration very doubtful. They made all possible speed in extricating the corpse, intending to call medical assistance, but it was too late; the vital spark was gone for ever. "Alas!" said old Richard, heaving a deep sigh, "poor man, 'tis all over with him! I wish he had lived a little longer to have repented of this; for he has surely died in a bad cause. Poor

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man! he was *somebody's* son, and no doubt dear to them, and nobody can tell how small a crime this hath, by a regular gradation, become the fruits of." Richard came twice across his eyes with the sleeve of his shirt, for he still wanted the coat; a thought of a tender nature shot through his heart. "Alas, if his parents are alive how will their hearts bear this, poor creatures!" said Richard weeping outright, "poor creatures! God pity them!"

The way that he was packed up was artful and curious. His knees were brought up towards his breast, and his feet and legs stuffed in a wooden box; another wooden box, a size larger, and wanting the bottom, made up the vacancy betwixt his face and knees, and their being only one fold of canvass around this, he breathed with the greatest freedom; but it had undoubtedly been the heaving of his breast which had caused the movement noticed by the servants. His right arm was within the box, and to his hand was tied a cutlass, with which he could rip himself from his confinement at once. There were also four loaded pistols secreted with him, and a silver wind-call. On coming to the pistols and cutlass, "Villain," said old Richard, "see what he has here. But I should not call him villain," said he again, softening his tone; "for he is now gone to answer at that bar where no false witness, nor loquacious orator, can bias the justice of the sentence pronounced on him. He is now in the true world, and I am in the false one. *We* can judge only from appearances, but thanks to our kind Maker and Preserver, that he was discovered, else it *is probable* that none of us should have again seen the light of day." These moral reflections, from the mouth of old Richard, by degrees raised the spirits of Edward: he was bewildered in uncertainty, and had undoubtedly given himself up for lost; but he now began to discover that he had done a meritorious and manful action, and, for the first time since he had fired the fatal shot, ventured to speak, "Faith it was

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lucky that I shot then," said Edward; but neither of his companions answered either good or bad. Alice, though rather grown desperate, behaved and assisted at this bloody affair, better than might have been expected. Edward surveyed the pistols all round, two of which were of curious workmanship. "But what do you think he was going to do with all these?" said Edward. "I think you need not ask that," Richard answered. "Faith it was a mercy that I shot, after all," said Edward, "for if we *had* loosed him out, we should have all been dead in a minute. I have given him a devil of a broadside, though. But look ye, Richard, Providence has directed me to the right spot, for I might as readily have lodged the contents of *Copenhagen* in one of these empty boxes." "It has been a deep laid scheme," said Richard, "to murder us, and rob our master's house; there must certainly be more concerned in it than these two."

Ideas beget ideas, often quite different, and then others again in unspeakable gradation, which run through and shift in the mind with as much velocity as the streamers around the pole in a frosty night. On Richard's mentioning more concerned, Edward instantaneously thought of a gang of thieves by night.—How he would break the leg of one—shoot another through the head—and scatter them like chaff before the wind. He would rather shoot one robber on his feet or on horseback than ten lying tied up in packs; and then what a glorious prey of pistols he would get from the dead rascals—how he would prime and load and fire away with perfect safety from within! —how Alice would scream, and Richard would pray, and all would go on with the noise and rapidity of a windmill, and he would acquire everlasting fame. So high was the young and ardent mind of Edward wrought up by this train of ideas, that he was striding up and down the floor, while his eyes gleamed as with a tint of madness. "Oh! if I had but plenty guns, and nothing ado but to shoot, how I would pepper the

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dogs!" said he with great vehemence, to the no small astonishment of his two associates, who thought him gone mad. "What can the fool mean?" said old Richard, "What can he ail at the dogs?" "Oh, it is the robbers that I mean," said Edward. "What robbers, you young fool?" said Richard. "Why, do not you think that the pedlar will come back at the dead of the night to the assistance of his friend, and bring plenty of help with him too?" said Edward. "There is not a doubt of it," said old Richard. "There is not a doubt of it," said Alice; and both stood up stiff with fear and astonishment. "Oh! merciful Heaven! what is to become of us?" said Alice again, "What are we to do?" "Let us trust in the Lord," said old Richard. "I intend, in the first place, to trust in old *Copenhagen*," said Edward, putting down the frizzel, and making it spring up again with a loud snap five or six times. "But, good Lord! what are we thinking about? I'll run and gather in all the guns in the county." The impulse of the moment was Edward's monitor. Off he ran like fire, and warned a few of the colonel's retainers, who he knew kept guns about them; these again warned others, and at eight o'clock they had twenty-five men in the house, and sixteen loaded pieces, including *Copenhagen*, and the four pistols found on the deceased. These were distributed amongst the front windows in the upper stories, and the rest, armed with pitchforks, old swords, and cudgels, kept watch below. Edward had taken care to place himself, with a comrade, at a window immediately facing the approach to the house, and now, backed as he was by such a strong party, grew quite impatient for another chance with his redoubted *Copenhagen*. All, however, remained quiet, until an hour past midnight, when it entered into his teeming brain to blow the thief's silver wind-call; so, without warning any of the rest, he set his head out at the window, and blew until all the hills and woods around yelled their echoes. This alarmed the guards, as not knowing the mean-

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ing of it; but how were they astonished at hearing it answered by another at no great distance! The state of anxiety into which this sudden and unforeseen circumstance threw our armed peasants, is more easily conceived than described. The fate of their master's great wealth, and even their own fates, was soon to be decided, and none but *he* who surveys and overrules futurity could tell what was to be the issue. Every breast heaved quicker, every breath was cut short, every gun was cocked and pointed toward the court-gate, every orb of vision was strained to discover the approaching foe by the dim light of the starry canopy, and every ear expanded to catch the distant sounds as they floated on the slow frosty breeze.

The suspense was not of long continuance. In less than five minutes the trampling of horses was heard, which increased as they approached to the noise of thunder; and in due course, a body of men on horseback, according to the account given by the colonel's people, exceeding their own number, came up at a brisk trot, and began to enter the court-gate. Edward, unable to restrain himself any longer, fired *Copenhagen* in their faces: one of the foremost dropped, and his horse made a spring towards the hall door. This discharge was rather premature, as the wall still shielded a part of the gang from the windows. It was, however, the watchword to all the rest, and in the course of two seconds the whole sixteen guns were discharged at them. Before the smoke dispersed they were all fled, no doubt greatly amazed at the reception which they met with. Edward and his comrade ran down stairs to see how matters stood, for it was their opinion that they had shot them every one, and that their horses had taken fright at the noise, and gallopped off without them; but the club below warmly protested against their opening any of the doors till day, so they were obliged to betake themselves again to their birth up stairs.

Though our peasants had gathered up a little courage and

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confidence in themselves, their situation was curious, and to them a dreadful one. They saw and heard a part of their fellow-creatures moaning and expiring in agonies in the open air, which was intensely cold, yet durst not go to administer the least relief, for fear of a surprise. An hour or two after this great brush, Edward and his messmate descended again, and begged hard for leave to go and reconnoitre for a few minutes, which after some disputes was granted. They found only four men fallen, who appeared to be all quite dead. One of them was lying within the porch. "Faith," said Edward, "here's the chap that I shot." The other three were without, at a considerable distance from each other. They durst not follow their track farther, as the road entered betwixt groves of trees, but retreated into their posts without touching any thing.

About an hour before day, some of them were alarmed at hearing the sound of horses feet a second time, which, however, was only indistinct, and heard at considerable intervals, and nothing of them ever appeared. Not long after this, Edward and his friend were almost frightened out of their wits, at seeing, as they thought, the dead man within the gate endeavouring to get up and escape. They had seen him dead, lying surrounded by a deluge of congealed blood; and nothing but the ideas of ghosts and hobgoblins entering their brains, they were so indiscreet as never to think of firing, but ran and told the tale of horror to some of their neighbours. The sky was by this time grown so dark, that nothing could be seen with precision; and they all remained in anxious incertitude, until the opening day discovered to them, by degrees, that the corpses were removed, and nothing left but large sheets of frozen blood; and the morning's alarms by the ghost and the noise of horses had been occasioned by some of the friends of the men that had fallen, conveying them away for fear of a discovery.

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Next morning the news flew like fire, and the three servants were much incommoded by crowds of idle and officious people that gathered about the house, some inquiring after the smallest particulars, some begging to see the body that lay in the parlour, and others pleased themselves with poring over the sheets of crimson ice, and tracing the drops of blood on the road down the wood. The colonel had no country factor, nor any particular friend in the neighbourhood; so the affair was not pursued with that speed which was requisite to the discovery of the accomplices, which, if it had, would have been productive of some very unpleasant circumstances, by involving sundry respectable families, as it afterwards appeared but too evidently. Dr Herbert, the physician who attended the family occasionally, wrote to the colonel, by post, concerning the affair; but though he lost no time, it was the fifth day before he arrived. Then indeed advertisements were issued, and posted up in all public places, offering rewards for a discovery of any person killed or wounded of late. All the dead and sick within twenty miles were inspected by medical men, and a most extensive search made, but to no purpose. It was too late; all was secured. Some indeed were missing, but plausible pretences being made for their absence, nothing could be done. But certain it is, sundry of these were never seen any more in the country, though many of the neighbourhood declared they were such people as nobody could suspect.

The body of the unfortunate man who was shot in the pack lay open for inspection a fortnight, but none would ever acknowledge so much as having seen him. The colonel then caused him to be buried at Bellingham; but it was confidently reported that his grave was opened and his corpse taken away. In short, not one engaged in this base and bold attempt was ever discovered. A constant watch was kept by night for some time. The colonel rewarded the defenders of

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his house liberally. Old Richard remained in the family during the rest of his life, and had a good salary for only saying prayers amongst the servants every night. Alice was married to a tobacconist at Hexham. Edward was made the Colonel's gamekeeper, and had a present of a fine gold mounted gun given him. His master afterwards procured him a commission in a regiment of foot, where he suffered many misfortunes and disappointments. He was shot through the shoulder at the battle of Fontenoy, but recovered, and, retiring on half-pay, took a small farm on the Scottish side. His character was that of a brave, but rash officer; kind, generous, and open-hearted in all situations. I have often stood at his knee, and listened with wonder and amazement to his stories of battles and sieges, but none of them ever pleased me better than that of the *Long Pack*.

Alas! his fate is fast approaching to us all! he hath many years ago submitted to the conqueror of all mankind. His brave heart is now a clod of the valley, and his gray hairs recline in peace on that pillow from which his head shall be raised only when time shall be no more.

A PEASANT'S FUNERAL.

On the 10th of April, 1810, I went with my father to the funeral of George Mouncie, who had been removed by a sudden death, from the head of a large family, now left in very narrow circumstances. As he had, however, during his life, been held in high estimation for honesty and simplicity of character, many attended to pay the last sad duty to departed worth. We were shown one by one, as we arrived, into a little hovel where the cows were wont to stand; although it

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was a pleasant day, and we would have been much more comfortable on the green; but it is held highly indecorous to give the entertainment at a burial without doors, and no one will submit to it.

We got each of us a glass of whisky as we entered, and then sat conversing, sometimes about common topics, but for the most part about our respective parish ministers; what subjects they had of late been handling, and how they had succeeded. Some of them remembered all the texts with the greatest exactness for seasons by-gone, but they could only remark, on many of them, that such a one made much or little of it.

One man said, in the course of some petty argument, "I do not deny it, David, your minister is a very good man, and a very clever man too; he has no fault but one." "What is that?" said David. "It is patronage," said the other. "Patronage," said David, "that cannot be a fault." "Not a fault, Sir? But I say it is a fault; and one that you and every one who encourages it, by giving it your countenance, will have to answer for. Your minister can never be a good shepherd, for he was not chosen by the flock." "It is a bad simile," said David; "the flock never chooses its own shepherd, but the owner of the flock." The greatest number of the inhabitants of that district being dissenters from the established church, many severe reflections were thrown out against the dangerous system of patronage, while no one ventured to defend it save David; who said, that if one learned man was not capable of making choice for a parish, the populace was much less so; and proved, from Scripture, that man's nature was so corrupted, that he was unable to make a wise choice for himself: and maintained, that the inhabitants of this country ought to be thankful that the legislature had taken the task out of their hands.

As a further proof of the justice of his argument, he asked,

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whether Jesus of Nazareth or Mahomet was the best preacher? The other answered, that none but a reprobate would ask the question. Very well, said David; Mahomet was one of your popular preachers; was followed, and adored by the multitude wherever he went, while he who spoke as never man spake was despised and rejected. Mahomet gained more converts to his religion in his life-time, than has been gained to the true religion in 1800 years. Away with your popular preachers, friend! they are bruised reeds. His antagonist was non-plus'd: he could only answer, "Ah! David, David, ye're on the braid way."

The women are not mixed with the men at these funerals, nor do they accompany the corpse to the place of interment; but in Nithsdale and Galloway, all the female friends of the family attend at the house, sitting in an apartment by themselves: The servers remark, that in their apartment, the lamentations for the family loss are generally more passionate than in the other.

The widow of the deceased, however, came in amongst us, to see a particular friend, who had travelled far, to honour the memory of his old and intimate acquaintance. He saluted her with great kindness, and every appearance of heartfelt concern for her misfortunes. The dialogue between them interested me; it was the language of nature, and no other spoke a word while it lasted.

"Ah! James," said she, "I did not think, the last time I saw you, that our next meeting would be on so mournful an occasion: we were all cheerful then, and little aware of the troubles awaiting us! I have since that time suffered many hardships and losses, James, but all of them were light to this —she wept bitterly;" James endeavoured to comfort her, but he was nearly as much affected himself. "I do not repine," said she, "since it is the will of Him who orders all things for the best purposes, and to the wisest ends: but, alas! I fear I

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am ill fitted for the task which Providence has asigned me!" With that she cast a mournful look at two little children who were peeping cautiously into the shiel. "These poor fatherless innocents," said she, "have no other creature to look to but me for any thing; and I have been so little used to manage family affairs, that I scarcely know what I am doing; for he was so careful of us all, so kind! and so good!"—"Yes," said James, wiping his eyes, "if he was not a good man, I know few were so! Did he suffer much in his last illness?" "I knew not what he suffered," returned she, "for he never complained. I now remember all the endearing things that he said to us, though I took little heed to them then, having no thoughts of being so soon separated from him. Little did I think he was so ill! though I might easily have known that he would never murmur nor repine at what Providence appointed him to endure. No, James, he never complained of any thing. Since the time our first great worldly misfortune happened, we two have sat down to many a poor meal, but he was ever alike cheerful, and thankful to the Giver.

"He was only ill four days, and was out of his bed every day: whenever I asked him how he did, his answer uniformly was, 'I am not ill now.' On the day preceding the night of his death, he sat on his chair a full hour speaking earnestly all the while to the children. I was busy up and down the house, and did not hear all; but I heard him once saying, that he might soon be taken from them, and then they would have no father but God: but that he would never be taken from them, nor ever would forsake them, if they did not first forsake him. He is a kind indulgent Being, continued he, and feeds the young ravens, and all the little helpless animals that look and cry to him for food, and you may be sure that he will never let the poor orphans who pray to him want.

"Be always dutiful to your mother, and never refuse to do what she bids you on any account; for you may be assured

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that she has no other aim than your good; confide all your cares and fears in her bosom, for a parent's love is stedfast; misfortune may heighten but cannot cool it.

"When he had finished, he drew his plaid around his head, and went slowly down to the little dell, where he used every day to offer up his morning and evening prayers, and where we have often sat together on Sabbath afternoons, reading verse about with our children in the Bible. I think he was aware of his approaching end, and was gone to recommend us to God; for I looked after him, and saw him on his knees.

"When he returned, I thought he looked extremely ill, and asked him if he was grown worse! He said he was not like to be quite well, and sat down on his chair, looking ruefully at the children, and sometimes at the bed. At length he said feebly, "Betty, my dear, make down the bed, and help me to it—it will be the last time." These words went through my head and heart like the knell of death—All grew dark around me, and I knew not what I was doing.

"He spoke very little after that, saving that at night he desired me, in a faint voice, not to go to my bed, but sit up with him; 'for,' said he, 'it is likely you may never need to do it again.' If God had not supported me that night, James, I could not have stood it, for I had much, much to do! A little past midnight my dear husband expired in my arms, without a groan or a struggle, save some convulsive grasps that he gave my hand. Calm resignation marked his behaviour to the last. I had only one acquaintance with me, and she was young.—The beds face towards each other, you know, and little John, who was lying awake, was so much shocked by a view which he got of the altered visage of his deceased parent, that he sprung from his bed in a frenzy of horror, and ran naked into the fields, uttering the most piercing and distracted cries. I was obliged to leave the young woman with the corpse and the rest of the children, and pursue the boy; nor was it till

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after running nearly a mile that I was able to catch him. The young woman had been seized with a superstitious terror in my absence, and was likewise fled; for, on my return, I found no creature in my dwelling but my dead husband and five sleeping infants. The boy next day was in a burning fever. O James! well may the transactions of that night be engraved on my memory for ever; yet, so bewildered were all the powers of my mind, that on looking back, they appear little otherwise than as a confused undefined shadow of something removed at a great distance."

Her heart was full, and I do not know how long she might have run on, had not one remarked that the company were now all arrived, and there was no more time to lose. James then asked a blessing, which lasted about ten minutes:—The bread and wine were served plentifully around—the coffin was brought out, covered, and fixed on poles—the widow supported that end of it where the head of her late beloved partner lay, until it passed the gate-way—then she stood looking wistfully after it, while the tears flowed plentifully from her eyes—A turn in the wood soon hid it from her sight for ever—She gave one short look up to Heaven, and returned weeping into her cottage.

DREADFUL STORY OF MACPHERSON.

I RECEIVED yours of the 20th October, intreating me to furnish you with the tale, which you say you have heard me relate, concerning the miraculous death of Major Macpherson and his associates among the Grampian hills. I think the story worthy of being preserved, but I never heard it related save once; and though it then made a considerable impression on my mind, being told by one who was well acquainted both with

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the scene and the sufferers, yet I fear my memory is not sufficiently accurate, with regard to particulars; and without these the interest of a story is always diminished, and its authenticity rendered liable to be called in question. I will however communicate it exactly as it remains impressed on my memory, without avouching for the particulars relating to it; in these I shall submit to be corrected by such as are better informed.

I have forgot on what year it happened, but I think it was about the year 1805–6, that Major Macpherson, and a few gentlemen of his acquaintance, with their attendants, went out to hunt in the middle of that tremendous range of mountains which rise between Athol and Badenoch. Many are the scenes of wild grandeur and rugged deformity which amaze the wanderer in the Grampian deserts; but none of them surpasses this in wildness and still solemnity. No sound salutes the listening ear, but the rushing torrent, or the broken eldrich bleat of the mountain goat. The glens are deep and narrow, and the hills steep and sombre, and so high, that their grizly summits appear to be wrapped in the blue veil that canopies the air. But it is seldom that their tops can be seen; for dark clouds of mist often rest upon them for several weeks together in summer, or wander in detached columns among their cliffs; and during the winter they are abandoned entirely to the storm. Then the flooded torrents, and rushing wreaths of accumulated snows, spend their fury without doing harm to any living creature; and the howling tempest raves uncontrolled and unregarded.

Into the midst of this sublime solitude did our jovial party wander in search of their game. They were highly successful. The heath cock was interrupted in the middle of his exulting whirr, and dropped lifeless on his native waste; the meek ptarmigan fell fluttering among her gray crusted stones, and the wild-roe foundered in the correi. The noise of the guns,

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and the cheering cries of the sportsmen, awakened those echoes that had so long slept silent; the fox slid quietly over the hill, and the wild deer bounded away into the forests of Glendee, from before the noisy invaders.

In the afternoon they stepped into a little *bothy*, or resting lodge, that stood by the side of a rough mountain stream, and having meat and drink, they abandoned themselves to mirth and jollity.

This Major Macpherson was said to have been guilty of some acts of extreme cruelty and injustice in raising recruits in that country, and was, on that account, held in detestation by the common people. He was otherwise a respectable character, and of honourable connexions, as were also the gentlemen who accompanied him.

When their hilarity was at the highest pitch, ere ever they were aware, a young man stood before them, of a sedate, mysterious appearance, looking sternly at the Major. Their laughter was hushed in a moment, for they had not observed any human being in the glen, save those of their own party, nor did they so much as perceive when their guest entered. Macpherson appeared particularly struck, and somewhat shocked at the sight of him; the stranger beckoned to the Major, who followed him instantly out of the bothy: The curiosity of the party was aroused, and they watched their motions with great punctuality; they walked a short way down by the side of the river, and appeared in earnest conversation for a few minutes, and from some involuntary motions of their bodies, the stranger seemed to be threatening Macpherson, and the latter interceding; they parted, and though then not above twenty yards distant, before the Major got half way back to the bothy, the stranger guest was gone, and they saw no more of him.

"I cannot tell how the truth may be,
"I say the tale as 'twas said to me."

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But what was certainly extraordinary, after the dreadful catastrophe, though the most strict and extended inquiry was made, neither this stranger nor his business could be discovered. The countenance of the Major was so visibly altered on his return, and bore such evident marks of trepidation, that the mirth of the party was marred during the remainder of the excursion, and none of them cared to ask him any questions concerning his visitant, or the errand that he came on.

This was early in the week, and on the Friday immediately following, Macpherson proposed to his companions a second expedition to the mountains. They all objected to it on account of the weather, which was broken and rough; but he persisted in his resolution, and finally told them, that he *must* and *would* go, and those who did not choose to accompany him might tarry at home. The consequence was, that the same party, with the exception of one man, went again to hunt in the forest of Glenmore.

Although none of them returned the first night after their departure, that was little regarded, it being customary for the sportsmen to lodge occasionally in the bothies of the forest; but when Saturday night arrived, and no word from them, their friends became dreadfully alarmed. On Sunday, servants were despatched to all the inns and gentlemen's houses in the bounds, but no accounts of them could be learned. One solitary dog only returned, and he was wounded and maimed. The alarm spread—a number of people rose, and in the utmost consternation went to search for their friends among the mountains. When they reached the fatal bothy—dreadful to relate! they found the dead bodies of the whole party lying scattered about the place! Some of them were considerably mangled, and one nearly severed in two. Others were not marked by any wound, of which number I think it was said the Major was one, who was lying flat on his face. It was a scene of wo, lamentation, and awful astonishment, none being

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able to account for what had happened; but it was visible that it had not been effected by any human agency. The bothy was torn from its foundations, and scarcely a vestige of it left—its very stones were all scattered about in different directions; there was one huge corner stone in particular, which twelve men could scarcely have raised, that was tossed to a considerable distance, yet no marks of either fire or water were visible. Extraordinary as this story may appear, and an extraordinary story it certainly is, I have not the slightest cause to doubt the certainty of the leading circumstances; with regard to the rest, you have them as I had them. In every mountainous district in Scotland, to this day, a belief in supernatural agency prevails, in a greater or less degree. Such an awful dispensation as the above was likely to rekindle every lingering spark of it.

STORY OF TWO HIGHLANDERS.

There is perhaps no quality of the mind, in which mankind differ more than in a prompt readiness either to act or answer to the point, in the most imminent and sudden dangers and difficulties; of which the following is a most pleasant instance.

On the banks of the Albany River, which falls into Hudson's Bay, there is, amongst others, a small colony settled, which is mostly made up of emigrants from the Highlands of Scotland. Though the soil of the valleys contiguous to the river is exceedingly rich and fertile, yet the winter being so long and severe, these people do not labour too incessantly in agriculture, but depend for the most part upon their skill in

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hunting and fishing for their subsistence; there being commonly abundance of both game and fish.

Two young kinsmen, both Macdonalds, went out one day into these boundless woods to hunt, each of them armed with a well-charged gun in his hand, and a *skene-dhu*, or Highland dirk, by his side. They shaped their course towards a small stream, which descends from the mountains to the N. W. of the river; on the banks of which they knew there were still a few wild swine remaining; and, of all other creatures, they wished most to meet with one of them; little doubting but that they would overcome even a pair of them, if chance would direct them to their lurking places, though they were reported to be so remarkable both for their strength and ferocity. They were not at all successful, having neglected the common game in searching for these animals; and a little before sunset they returned homeward, without having shot any thing save one wild turkey. But when they least expected it, to their infinite joy they discovered a deep pit or cavern, which contained a large litter of fine half-grown pigs, and none of the old ones with them. This was a prize indeed: so, without losing a moment, Donald said to the other, "Mack, you pe te littlest man, creep you in and durk te little sows, and I'll pe keeping vatch at te door." Mack complied without hesitation—gave his gun to Donald—unsheathed his *skene-dhu*, and crept into the cave head foremost; but after he was all out of sight, save the brogues, he stopped short, and called back, "But Lord, Tonald, pe shoor to keep out te ould wans." "Ton't you pe fearing tat, man," said Donald.

The cave was deep, but there was abundance of room in the further end, where Mack, with his sharp *skene-dhu*, now commenced the work of death. He was scarcely well begun, when Donald perceived a monstrous wild boar advancing upon him, roaring, and grinding his tusks, while the fire of rage

gleamed from his eyes. Donald said not a word, for fear of alarming his friend; besides, the savage was so hard upon him ere ever he was aware, he scarcely had time for any thing: so, setting himself firm, and cocking his gun, he took his aim; but, that the shot might prove the more certain death, he suffered the boar to come within a few paces of him before he ventured to fire; he at last drew the fatal trigger, expecting to blow out his eyes, brains and all. Merciful Heaven! the gun missed fire, or flashed in the pan, I am not sure which. There was no time to lose—Donald dashed the piece in the animal's face, turned his back, and fled with precipitation. The boar pursued him only for a short space, for having heard the cries of his suffering young ones, as he passed the mouth of the den, he hasted back to their rescue. Most men would have given all up for lost—It was not so with Donald—Mack's life was at stake. As soon as he observed the monster return from pursuing him, Donald faced about, and pursued him in his turn; but having, before this, from the horror of being all torn to pieces, run rather too far without looking back, the boar had by that oversight got considerably a-head of him—Donald strained every nerve—uttered some piercing cries—and even for all his haste did not forget to implore assistance from Heaven. His prayer was short, but pithy—"O Lord! puir Mack! puir Mack!" said Donald, in a loud voice, while the tears gushed from his eyes. In spite of all his efforts, the enraged animal reached the mouth of the den before him, and entered! It was, however, too narrow for him to walk in on all-four; he was obliged to drag himself in as Mack had done before; and, of course, his hind feet lost their hold of the ground. At this important crisis Donald overtook him—laid hold of his large, long tail—wrapped it around both his hands—set his feet to the bank, and held back in the utmost desperation.

Mack, who was all unconscious of what was going on above

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ground, wondered what way he came to be involved in utter darkness in a moment. He waited a little while, thinking that Donald was only playing a trick upon him, but the most profound obscurity still continuing, he at length bawled out, "Tonald, man, Tonald—phat is it that'll ay pe stopping te light?" Donald was too much engaged, and too breathless, to think of making any reply to Mack's impertinent question, till the latter, having waited in vain a considerable time for an answer, repeated it in a louder cry. Donald's famous laconic answer, which perhaps never was, nor ever will be equalled, has often been heard of—"Tonald, man, Tonald,—I say phat is it that'll ay pe stopping te light?" bellowed Mack. "Should te tail preak, you'll fin' tat," said Donald.

Donald continued the struggle, and soon began to entertain hopes of ultimate success. When the boar pulled to get in, Donald held back; and when he struggled to get back again, Donald set his shoulder to his large buttocks, and pushed him in: and in this position he kept him, until he got an opportunity of giving him some deadly stabs with his *skene-dhu* behind the short rib, which soon terminated his existence.

Our two young friends by this adventure realised a valuable prize, and secured so much excellent food, that it took them several days to get it conveyed home. During the long winter nights, while the family were regaling themselves on the hams of the great wild boar, often was the above tale related, and as often applauded and laughed at.

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MARIA'S TALE.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

Sir,—You have manifested your desire of rendering yourself a useful member of society, by ridiculing the foibles, and branding the crimes of your fellow-citizens. Amidst your ingenious and engaging speculations, can you listen to the voice of the wretched? Even in your endeavours to please, you have hitherto appeared anxious to instruct and to reform; to you, therefore, as the friend of virtue and of man, I beg leave to address the following narrative. It contains nothing wonderful, but it is *true;* and may in some degree serve to warn others against the arts by which I was deceived; it is the relation of a perfidy of which myself was the victim.

I was born in a parish about forty miles distant from Edinburgh. My father was a farmer in that parish, more respectable for his prudence and virtues than for his wealth. As soon as I was old enough, I was sent to the parochial school, where I learned the usual branches of education for one in my station in life; and in the evenings, and on Sunday, I was carefully instructed by my parents in the principles of our holy religion. I was commended as a dutiful and promising child; and was daily reminded, that the more cheerfully I obeyed my parents, the more I would be loved. I was taught that the same Almighty Being who caused every flower of the garden to grow, and placed the sun and the moon and all the stars in the sky, created me, and my parents, and all mankind. I was assured that God kept an exact account

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of every one's words and actions; that he loved the good, and was angry with the wicked; and that he would love me too, and make me for ever happy, if I would obey my parents, and ask his blessing and his love.

As far as the heart was concerned I was sincerely pious, and I felt all the satisfaction of well-doing. Ah! how amiable is the piety of a young and innocent mind! how cheering and sweet the approbation of those we love! With what tenderness I hid my face in the lap of an affectionate mother, and lisped my evening prayer to that God who never slumbers nor sleeps, that he would watch over my repose. When I retired to bed after these simple acts of devotion, I felt a warmer affection for every one I was acquainted with: my little sister, who slept beside me, was dearer than usual; I could not forbear clasping the sleeping infant in my arms, and wishing her awake to share my delightful sensations. Perhaps, Sir, you may think these circumstances trifling, but they are connected with my happiest days, and the recital is pleasing. Miserable and degraded as I now am, the remembrance of early peace sometimes returns to my mind like a dream, and soothes for a time the feelings of shame and remorse.

The frolics of childhood began to be blended with the pursuits of youth, but every one of these pursuits brought me new happiness. I was now in my fifteenth year, and seldom had any thing occurred to ruffle the natural evenness of my temper, or induce a wish which I might not innocently indulge. Under my father's humble roof no temptation assailed me; I knew not what temptation was. My father and mother had been early married, and had gradually acquired each other's sentiments and habits, so that difference of opinion was seldom entertained, and domestic discord was never known.

Most of our family were grown up; and as my father's farm

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was too small to require so many labourers, he determined to let some of us go to service, and I was of that number. I was engaged with a gentleman's family in the neighbourhood that had always expressed great regard for me, and had often solicited my father to let me become one of their servants. To this my father did not agree without considerable reluctance; however, as they had conferred some trifling obligations on him, he did not think it proper to disoblige them, so I entered to their service. I had been there about six months, when the gentleman's youngest son, who was studying medicine in Edinburgh, came to spend the summer with the family. He was a handsome young man, of easy engaging manners, insinuating in his address, and extremely affable to his inferiors. In short, he was both naturally and habitually engaging. His numerous little condescensions could not fail to render him agreeable to those who were beneath him in rank and fortune; and you may easily believe, Sir, that they were peculiarly flattering and dangerous to me, when I tell you, that I was the object of his particular attention. He thought me a sweet innocent girl, and he was too ungenerous to spare that innocence which he admired. He was sufficiently skilled in the female heart, to know that it is not proof against professions of a tender attachment; and that our vanity and self-love too seldom allow us to examine whether such professions are feigned or sincere. My youth and simplicity convinced him that he might easily gain my affections. I had heard many accounts of the falsehood of men, but had always looked upon them as something in which I was nowise interested. I never dreamt that there were men who could profess a sincere affection for me, and, at the same time, resolve deliberately to gratify their passions at the expense of my character and my happiness. I had never loved, but my heart was warm, and I soon experienced that it was susceptible of the fondest regard.

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He took every opportunity of conversing with me when alone, followed me to my work and assisted me; and when the other girls were present, always preferred me, and seemed anxious to recommend himself to my esteem. When a party dined at his father's, he left them as soon as possible, and said he was more happy beside me than in the drawing-room. I was flattered by his kindnesses, and in my turn became anxious to please, and show him that I was not ungrateful. I endeavoured to surpass my fellow-servants in dexterity at my work, and in the taste and neatness of my dress; I began to observe and imitate the manners of his sisters, and of such ladies as visited the family; and in short, studied to improve in every thing that I thought could render me more agreeable to him. In all this, however, I had no regard to consequences; I loved him; I followed the dictates of nature; my only aim was to please. His assiduities were multiplied, and my attachment became daily stronger, till my feelings were wound up to the highest pitch.

One morning as I was working alone, he came and sat down beside me, and, after remaining for some time silent, and apparently in great agitation, he told me he was soon to set out for Edinburgh, but he feared he should leave his happiness behind him. I blushed, and could not help showing that I understood his meaning. He perceived my confusion, and without giving me time to recollect myself, threw his arms about my neck, and declared in the most passionate accents, that he loved me, and could not live without my affection.

After I was a little recovered from the delirium into which this declaration had thrown me, I said he surely meant to tease me, for I was every way unworthy of his notice: he was a gentleman, and could not intend to marry a poor girl like me. He called Heaven to witness that he sincerely intended to marry me, as soon as he had an opportunity; for

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his birth, he said, he did not value it; he thought me his equal, and his rank should soon be mine.—When I objected that his parents would look down upon me, and be angry with him for forming so mean a connexion, he said, he feared they would be very much displeased, and would perhaps disinherit him; but they could not deprive him of his profession, and he could depend on that for a respectable livelihood. It will easily be perceived what effect this declaration was likely to produce; it was natural for me to be devoted to the man who would renounce his patrimony for my sake, and brave the ridicule of his companions, and the resentment and reproaches of his parents.

Our intimacy had not escaped the observation of his parents, and they had in vain used every art to prevent it. The more they tried to keep us asunder, the more eagerly he sought my company, and studied to elude their vigilance. My own parents, too, had taken notice of our intimacy, and dreaded it more than his; for they justly suspected that he must have designs which he durst not avow. They frequently warned me of the danger of listening to his professions; they entreated me to shun his company; and threatened, in case of disobedience, to remove me from the family. Instead of alarming me, however, their apprehensions appeared altogether groundless; I became tired of their advices, which I thought well-meant, but excessively troublesome; I visited them seldom, and no longer found pleasure in that home where I had so often been happy.

The time of my lover's departure approached, and I looked forward to our marriage as an event that was certain and by no means distant. We agreed that as soon as he was settled, I should leave his father's house privately, and follow him to Edinburgh. For this purpose, he promised to inform me where I should meet him, and to transmit me a sufficient sum of money for defraying the expense of my journey. Such

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were the promises which I fondly believed, and by which I was decoyed to destruction.

But my crime was soon succeeded by remorse; the consciousness of guilt dissipated the gay visions that had dazzled me, and then, for the first time, I began to fear that he might forget his promises, and leave me to infamy and disgrace. He employed all his art to re-assure me, and I affected to be satisfied, and endeavoured to be cheerful, but my peace of mind was gone. My fellow-servants observed my uneasiness, and perhaps guessed the cause; the eyes of every one seemed to be turned on me, and to read my guilt in my countenance. I dreaded the sight of my parents, whose advices I had slighted; and the near prospect of parting with the man I loved aggravated my distress, and made me insensible to every enjoyment. He departed, and I waited month after month in anxious expectation of the promised intelligence, but I waited in vain.

His parents, who had received some hints of my design, were so careful to conceal from me every thing respecting him, that I could scarcely discover in what street he lodged. My parents began to suspect my situation, which I positively denied, until it became too apparent to be longer concealed.

The shame of acknowledging that I had so long persisted in a falsehood, together with the necessity of giving that satisfaction which the church would demand, preyed upon my spirits, and made me form the rash and dangerous resolution of going to throw myself at the feet of the barbarous man who had deceived me, who alone could screen me from ignominy, and in whom I still hoped to find a friend.

In pursuance of this resolution, I rose early in the morning, and tied up a small bundle of clothes, and a few shillings, which was all the money I was mistress of; and having thus prepared for my disconsolate journey, I cast a farewell look on the couch where I had passed a feverish night, and the pillow that was then wet with my tears. Former scenes rushed

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to my recollection, and nearly overpowered me with anguish. By one imprudent step I saw my peace of mind for ever destroyed. I stole softly out of the house, and, after travelling all day with the most painful exertion, which, in the condition I then was, I was ill fitted to bear, I arrived at his lodging late at night, and was informed that he had left Edinburgh, about a week before, to spend the harvest with a relation in one of the northern counties of England. What could I do? I was without a friend and without a home; without money, and unable to work. I rushed into the street in an emotion of anguish and despair, and hurried along without knowing whither I went. I no longer seemed to be the object of Divine care, and, instead of imploring mercy and protection, I thought vengeance was already pursuing me; and, in a transport of passion, raised my eyes to Heaven, and cursed my fate, and the author of all my misfortunes. After wandering about for the greatest part of the night in this distracted state of mind, I entered a house, which I supposed was the haunt of debauchery and vice; for this appeared to be the only abode to which I was entitled now, and the only one where I was likely to be admitted. But never let the wretched despair, or for a moment suppose that the Governor of the universe sports with the miseries of his creatures. Folly may indeed lead them to misery, but misfortune, for the most part, is only a more gentle name for imprudence. That protecting Providence, of which I had just despaired, over-ruled my rash resolution, and directed me into the house of a poor but benevolent woman, who let her mean lodgings to destitute girls that were out of service; but these girls were all virtuous, or at least their hostess believed them to be so, and did every thing in her power to render them comfortable at a small expense. When I went in, I assumed an air of levity, and asked if I could be accommodated with a bed for a few nights. The woman replied that her house was full. I then said that any kind of lodging

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would please me; that I would rest me by the fire, or any where, for I was a stranger in Edinburgh, and knew of no place where I could go. "You are from the country I see," said she. I answered that I was; and had not yet entered any other house in the town. She then asked if my parents were alive, which I answered in the affirmative. "Why, then, did you leave them?" said she, "and come to a place where there is no one to own you? Believe me you are come to the worst place in the kingdom for a friendless and beautiful girl." I could make no answer but by tears. "I hope, (continued she,) you have not run away from your parents? If you have, what think you they will be suffering on your account?" I sobbed till my heart was like to break—"What! you have then run away from your parents. Pray, what tempted you to do so? Was it some man who persuaded you to take so imprudent a step?"—"Yes," said I; for that was all the answer I could make. "And what is become of him?" said she, "I hope he has not deserted you too." "Yes," said I. The poor woman looked at me with compassion, and I saw a tear glistening in her eye. "Alas! poor girl," said she, "I see how it is with you. I fear somebody has been much to blame; but you are not the first who have been decoyed to folly and ruin by that unrelenting creature man; nor the first whom I have succoured in the same situation. You must not lodge in the street; and any other place into which you could find admittance would still be worse. Endeavour to compose yourself, and stay with me a night or two, until we consider what can be done for you."

The excessive fatigue I had undergone, and the violent agitation of my spirits, brought on premature labour before morning, and I was delivered of a daughter, without any other assistance than such as was afforded by my unfortunate lodgers. I looked upon my helpless infant with a mother's fondness, but had not even the means of providing it with clothes. In

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wild agony I snatched it to my bosom, and wished in my heart that we might soon be companions in the grave. I asked if it was also accursed for my sake, and doomed, like me, to be the victim of a betrayer? But my anxiety for its fate was of short duration, for it only lived till next morning.

Those who may be least inclined to palliate my crime, would have pitied me had they known what I felt, while I wrapt the body of my child in a napkin, which I had received to keep in remembrance of its father, (for that was the only shroud I could provide,) and having laid it in its rude coffin, delivered it to be consigned to the grave of a stranger.

While I was thus expiating my faults, my parents were involved in the deepest affliction. They easily guessed the cause of my departure, and immediately despatched two of my brothers in quest of me; but, notwithstanding the most diligent search, they did not find me till three weeks after the death of my child. Having discharged what debts I had contracted, they conducted me to the house of a relation, a few miles from Edinburgh, where ill health still confines me.

Thus, Sir, you have seen that I possessed all the advantages of a virtuous education, and had given the most promising hopes of future worth and felicity: and you have seen these bright prospects clouded and destroyed by folly and wickedness. You have seen how gradually I proceeded, adding one crime to another, till I was brought into a state of wretchedness and distraction too severe for humanity. I freely forgive the author of my misfortunes, and pray that he may have the pardon of God; nor will I be so harsh as to conclude that he would have pursued his schemes with such cruel perseverance, had he foreseen their fatal consequences. When intoxicated with passion, perhaps, he even believed his promises were sincere. Or is it customary, with the higher orders of your sex, Sir, thus to triumph over virtue and innocence, and take pleasure in the misery of those, who, depend-

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ing on their honour and integrity, sacrifice every thing to them. It is a gratification so selfish, mean, and ungenerous, that I wonder every delicate and sympathetic affection of the human mind does not recoil from it; from a principle so cruel and so adverse to all the laws of God and man. It is indeed a stain nowise hurtful to the character of a gentleman, and, consequently, may seem a small matter to such as look no farther than the bourne of mortal existence. But let them remember, that they will one day be obliged to answer at that tribunal where there is no respect of persons; and to a Judge who will not suffer the injurer of the meanest of those who bear his image on earth to escape with impunity. And lightly as this vice is treated by the present generation, Sir, there is no other that is so injurious to the cause of morality; so apt to eradicate every tender feeling which nature has shed around the human heart; or the cause of so much wretchedness, misery, and woe.

You see, Sir, that my tale is short and simple, and may appear uninteresting to you, and the greater number of your readers; but it is, nevertheless, highly interesting to me; and I think it does my heart good to relate it, as it recalls to my mind what I once was—what I still might have been—and what I now am. It may, perhaps, be instrumental in warning the young, the gay, and the thoughtless, of my own sex, to steer clear of that whirlpool where all my prospects of happiness have been wrecked, and swallowed up for ever. And that whatever they may suffer, or whatever they may be made to believe, never to part with their virtue; for it is only by preserving that inviolate that they can secure love and esteem from the other sex, respect from their own, the approbation of their own hearts, or the love of their Creator. I am, Sir, your most obedient and wretched M. M.

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SINGULAR DREAM,

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

The other night, on my way home, after a fatiguing day, I stumbled into the house of an old acquaintance, on purpose to rest myself, as well as to find amusement in his conversation, until my usual time of going to bed. This friend of mine is a phenomenon of wisdom and foresight. He keeps a weekly, if not a daily register of all the undermining and unmannerly actions practised by the men and women of this metropolis and its environs, as far as his information serves him, and he spares no pains to gain that information; and consequently can, when he pleases, retail all the incidents that have led to the births, marriages, and deaths, for twenty years bygone; as well as to all the failures in business, most of which he foresaw and prognosticated with the greatest punctuality. In a short time I was struck with astonishment at the man's amazing discernment, for though we were fellow collegians, and have long been known to one another, we have not been in habits of intimacy; and I did not use to hear him mentioned by associates with half so much deference as it appeared to me he was entitled to. I set him down in my mind as a most useful member of society, and from his extraordinary powers of estimating human characters, and human actions aright, one whom it would be wisdom for all men, both high and low, to consult before they formed any permanent connexion, or entered upon any undertaking of moment.

Impelled by a curiosity too natural, of seeing into futurity, I soon began to consult him about the affairs of the nation, and what was most likely to be the result of the present stagnation of trade, and measures of government. My heart thrills with horror to this hour, when I reflect upon the authentic and undeniable information which I received from him. We are

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all in the very jaws of destruction; our trade, our liberties, our religion, Heaven be our guard! our religion and all are hanging by one slender thread! which the flames of hell have already reached, and will soon singe in two. This was a shocking piece of intelligence for me, who had always cherished the fond idea that we were the most thriving and flourishing people on the face of the whole earth. When I was a young man, the several classes of society in this country were not half so well fed, clothed, or educated as they now are, what could I think but that we were a thriving and happy people? But instead of that, we were ruined bankrupts, prodigals, depraved reprobates, and the slaves of sin and Satan. Much need have the people of this land to be constantly upon their watch-towers, having their lamps trimmed, and their beacons burning; for indeed there is not one thing as it appears to be. Our liberty is a flam, our riches a supposition, and the Bank notes in fact not worth a halfpenny a piece. Improvements in the arts and sciences, or in rural and national economy, are no signs of prosperity, but quite the reverse. And, would you believe it? There are some gentlemen high in office, whom I, and most of the nation, have always regarded as men of the utmost probity—Lord help us, they are nothing better than confounded rascals! O! that we were wise, that we understood this!

Taught thus, by incontrovertible arguments, that the end of all things, at least with respect to Britain, was at hand, I gladly relinquished the disagreeable topic, and introduced the affairs of this city; yet I confess I did it with a good deal of diffidence, having learned to distrust my own powers of perception altogether, and consequently knew how unfit I was to judge of any thing from appearance. But how shall I ever describe to you the deformed picture, which was now for the first time placed before my astonished view! It is impossible; for it was one huge mass of inconsistence. I was plainly told, that our magistrates are no magistrates, but that they only

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suppose themselves so: that they are a set of gossipping, gormandizing puppies: that they are fast bringing the city to ruin, which must soon come to the hammer, and be sold to the highest bidder: that our ministers of the gospel are no ministers of the gospel—that they are drunkards, wine-bibbers, and friends of publicans and sinners—that there is not one sentence of pure gospel preached amongst them all!—and the holy sacraments are degenerated into a mere mock or matter of form; which those only condescend to accept, who, unable to preserve a character for any thing else, endeavour to scratch up one for devotion; what a miserable state our church must be in, thought I, when "the *boar* that from the *forest* comes; doth waste it at his pleasure." I beg your pardon, Sir, I was not meaning you.

In the High Court of Session, too, where I supposed every thing to have been decided with equity and conscience, all is, it seems, conducted by intrigue, and the springs of justice directed by self-interest alone. But that which grieved me most of all was, what he told me of our ladies, those sweet, those amiable creatures, whom I had always fondly viewed as that link in the chain of creation which connected the angelic with the human nature. Alas, Sir! it seems that it is too true that Burns says; "They're a' run w—s and jades thegither;" for my friend assured me, that they are all slaves to the worst of passions; and that they neither think nor act as if they were accountable creatures. He said that none of them ever employed a thought on any thing better, than by what means she might get a husband, or how most to plague one after she had him; and that when they were not ruminating on the one or the other of these, it was sure to be on something worse; and he cited an old foolish Roman in confirmation of his theory, who says, "*mulier quæ sola cogitat, male cogitat.*"

About this time another gentleman entered, who was without doubt come for the same purpose with myself, namely, to

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learn how mankind were behaving themselves on an average; and as he took up the conversation, I remained silent, as indeed I had done for the most part of the time since I entered. My ideas being wound up to the highest pitch of rueful horror, I fell into a profound reverie, and from thence into a sound sleep, in which it seems I continued for nearly half an hour, and might have continued much longer, if they had not awakened me, on perceiving that I was labouring under the most painful sensations. The truth is, though I did not like to tell them all at that time, I had been engaged in a dreadful dream. There is an old Scotch proverb, that "one had better dream of the deil than the minister;" but I dreamed of them both, and mixed them so completely together that they seemed to be one and the same person; but there is no accounting for these vagaries of fancy in the absence of reason.

I thought I was in a country church, where you have often been, Sir, and that I had just taken my seat in the pew where you and I have often sat and sung bass to the old tunes, which our old precentor lilted over to us; when, who should I see mount the pulpit to preach, but the very identical friend who sat discoursing beside me, and who had so lately opened my eyes to our ruined and undone state. He read out a text from the Scriptures with great boldness. I have forgot where he said it was, for indeed I thought he did not name the right book; but I remember some of the words, which run thus: "Because our daughters are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks, and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a *tripping* with their feet." He read it twice over, and then I heard a tittering noise; when, looking over my shoulder, I saw the church filled with the most beautiful women I had ever beheld in my life!—I wept to think how bad miserable creatures they were all, that so much wickedness should be concealed under so sweet a veil, and that their parents should have been at so much pains bringing up so

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many pests to society, and objects fitted for destruction. But the more I looked at them, they became the more lovely, and the more I looked at the preacher, he became the more ugly, until I could no longer look at him without terror. At length a tall lady stretched forward her head, and whispered to me that he was the devil. I uttered a loud scream, and hid myself behind the pew, having a peculiar aversion to that august personage, and, peeping through a hole, I beheld him change his form gradually from that of a human creature, into a huge black sow. He then stepped down from the pulpit, with some difficulty, and began feeding out of a deep trough. A thought struck me in a moment, that I might easily rid mankind of their greatest enemy, by felling him at one blow, before he observed me, for his head was quite out of sight: so, snatching down a grave-pole, I glided silently away to execute my cowardly purpose. When I came within stroke, I heaved my grave-pole, and collected my whole force for the blow. "I'll do for you now, old boy," said I to myself. At that very moment he lifted up his ugly phiz! and gave me such a look, that I was quite overcome with terror, and fled yelling along the area, and the devil after me. My knees grew extremely weak, and besides, I was so entangled among women and petticoats, that I sunk powerless to the earth, and Satan got hold of me by the arm. My friend, at that unlucky moment, observing my extraordinary agitation, took hold of my arm, and awaked me. My scattered senses not having got time to collect, I still conceived him to be the devil, and remembering the text, "resist the devil, and he will fly from you," I attacked my astonished friend with the most determined fury, boxing him unmercifully on the face, and uttering the most dreadful imprecations, resolved, it seems, that he should not insult me, or take me away with impunity. The other gentleman interfered, and brought me to my senses. "What do you mean by such a rude and beastly attack, Sir?"

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said my friend, while the blood poured from his nose. "I most humbly beg your pardon, Sir," said I, "but indeed I thought you was the devil." "Upon my word, a very extraordinary excuse," said he; "I know I never had any great share of beauty to boast of, but I am not just so ugly as to be taken for the devil neither; and I am certainly entitled to expect an apology, both for your mad assault, and the whimsical excuse you have made for it." He accompanied this sentence with a look so malicious, and, as I imagined, so like a fiend, that I was utterly disconcerted; and could only add, by way of palliation, that I believed I did not know what I was doing; so, bowing, I walked off rather abruptly, accompanied by the other gentleman, who was ready to burst with laughter, all the way down the stairs.—When we got to the street, "Well," said he, "our friend certainly was to blame, but you have, without doubt, carried the jest rather too far. I believe, after all, that he has been speaking the truth of you, which has caused you to take it so ill." "Speaking the truth of me!" exclaimed I, "what do you mean? I hope he was not assailing my character and foreboding my ruin while I was asleep?" "Aye, that's very good," said he, laughing; "that's very good indeed; so you were indeed sleeping, and did not hear a word that he said?" "Upon my honour, I did not hear a word that he said," returned I. "Oh! that is rather too bad, my dear Sir," said he, continuing to laugh immoderately; "why, what the devil was it then that offended you, and induced you to give him such a drubbing?"—"The devil, I believe it was," said I; and then began a long bungling story about my dream, at which he only laughed the more, being firmly established in the belief that the sleep was a sham, and the assault intentional, or at least that it was the consequence of my having been irritated past bearing, by his injurious reflections.

Now, as this business is soon to be made public, by being

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discussed in a court of justice, I intreat you to reserve a place in your Book of Tales for this letter, which I declare to you, upon my honour, contains the real and fair statement of the facts as they followed upon one another. I am cited to answer for entering the house of Mr A. T. philosopher, and teacher of the science of chance, without any previous invitation, interpellation, or intimation; but with an intention, as it would appear, of wounding, bruising, maiming, and taking away the life of the foresaid A. T. philosopher, and teacher of the science of chance; and for most feloniously, maliciously, and barbarously, threatening, cursing, and striking the said Mr A. T. philosopher, and teacher of the science of chance, to the effusion of his blood, the damage of his person and clothes, and the endangerment of his life; and that without any provocation on the part of the foresaid A. T. philosopher and foresaid of foresaids. Yet, notwithstanding of all this, and though my counsel assures me, that I will be found liable in expenses to a high amount, I hereby declare to you, and to the world, that I am conscious of no evil intention with regard to my friend the philosopher. I went with an intention of receiving amusement and instruction from his conversation. I believed all that he told me.—I fell asleep,—which was certainly a breach of good manners, but what demon put it into my head, that he was the devil I cannot tell; *certes*, I thought he was; and when a man acts from the best intentions, I do not think he is blame-worthy if the effect should sometimes prove different. It is very hard that a man should be severely fined for resisting the devil, when there are so few that give themselves the trouble to do it.

It is true, that, owing to my country education, I am a little inclined to be superstitious; but I cannot help thinking, that the whole of the accident was a kind of judgment inflicted on us both for a dangerous error; on him for abusing so many of the human race behind their backs, who were in all

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probability better than he; and on me for assenting implicitly to all his injurious insinuations. Nay, I would even fain carry the mystery a little further, by alleging, that a traducer and backbiter is actually a limb or agent of the devil, and that the dream was a whisper conveyed to my fancy by one of those guardian spirits that watch over the affairs of mortal men. The strange combination of ideas which that foolish dream and its concomitant mischiefs have impressed on my mind, have, besides, given me a mortal aversion to the features and looks of my old acquaintance; it has likewise led me often to an examination of the apparent springs of this principle of detraction, and foreboding of evil from every action, whether public or private; and the more I think of it, the more firmly am I persuaded of its impropriety; and that whatever such foreseers may pretend, if their inferences point only towards evil, it is a symptom of a bad heart. "Let no such men be trusted."

We can form our opinions of that which we do not know, only by placing it in comparison with something that we do know: whoever therefore is over-run with suspicion, and detects, or pretends to detect artifice, in every proposal, must either have learned the wickedness of mankind by experience, or he must derive his judgment from the consciousness of his own disposition, and impute to others the same inclinations which he feels predominate in himself. Suspicion, however necessary, through ways beset on all sides by fraud and malice, has been always considered, when it exceeds the common measure, as a token of depravity. It is a temper so uneasy and restless, that it is very justly appointed the concomitant of guilt. It is an enemy to virtue and to happiness; for he that is already corrupt will naturally be suspicious; and he that becomes suspicious will quickly be corrupt.

I was for the space of twenty years intimately acquainted with an old man named Adam Bryden, whose disposition and

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rule of behaviour were widely different from those of the philosopher above mentioned, and I fear too many of the inhabitants of this metropolis. It was a maxim with him, which, though never avowed, was easily discovered, that if he could not say well of a person, he said nothing of them at all. Of the characters of the fair sex he was peculiarly tender in this respect, and always defended them against every probability. When the charges became too evident to be longer denied, he framed the kindest and most tender excuses for them, on account of the simplicity of their hearts, and kindness of their natures, which induced them to trust too implicitly to the generosity of others. It was impossible to be long in his company, without conceiving a higher opinion of the goodness of the Almighty, of his love and kindness towards his creatures, and of his wisdom displayed in the government of the universe. On the contrary, it is impossible to be long in the company of Mr A. T. the philosopher, without conceiving that Being who is all goodness, to be a tyrant, who has created man, and woman in particular, for the sole purpose of working mischief, and then of being punished eternally for that very mischievous disposition which is an ingredient in the composition of their natures. It was impossible to be long in company with the former, without conceiving a higher opinion of the dignity of human nature, and of the happiness attainable by man, both in this life and that which is to come. It is impossible to be long in the company of the latter, without conceiving ourselves to be in a world of fiends, who have no enjoyment but in the gratification of sensual appetites, nor any hope but in the ruin of others.

Let your readers, then, Sir, consider seriously, which of these two characters appears to be most congenial to a heavenly mind; which of them is most likely to be productive of happiness and contentment in this life; and which of them is most conformable to the precepts left us by our great

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Lawgiver, in order to fit us for partaking of the blessings of a world to come. Let them weigh all these considerations impartially, and imitate the one or the other, as reason and revelation shall direct; but perhaps those who delight in magnifying the shades in the human character, may, in the end, be subjected to pay as dear, if not dearer, for it, than either Mr A. T. the philosopher, or your humble servant,

J. G.

LOVE ADVENTURES

OF

MR GEORGE COCHRANE.

"Sans les femmes, les deux extremités de la vie seraient sans secours, et le milieu sans plaisir." RICH.

It is well known to all my friends that I am an old bachelor. I must now inform them further, that this situation in life has fallen to me rather by accident than from choice; for though the confession can hardly fail to excite laughter, I frankly acknowledge, that there is nothing I so much regret as the many favourable opportunities which I have suffered to escape me of entering into that state, which every natural and uncontaminated bias of the human soul bears testimony to, as

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the one our all-wise Creator has ordained for the mutual happiness of creatures. Never does that day dawn in the east, shedding light and gladness over the universe, nor that night wrap the world in darkness and silence, on which I do not sigh for the want of a kind and beloved bosom friend, whom I might love, trust, and cherish, in every circumstance and situation of life; to whom I might impart every wish and weakness of my heart, and receive hers in return; rejoice in her joy; share her griefs; and weep with her over her own or the misfortunes of others, or the general depravity of human nature; kneel with her at the same footstool of infinite grace, and jointly implore forgiveness for our frailties and failings, and a blessing on our honest endeavours at fulfilling the duties of our station. But as the case now stands with me, I find myself to be an insignificant, selfish creature, unconnected to the world by any ties that can tend to endear it to me, further than the sordid love of life, or the enjoyment of some sensual gratification. I am placed, as it were alone, in the midst of my species; or rather like a cat in a large family of men, women, and children, to whose joys it bears witness without being able to partake of them; and where no person cares a farthing for it, unless for his own benefit or amusement.

When lying on a bed of sickness, instead of experiencing the tender attention and indulgence which the parent or husband enjoys, I am left to languish alone, without one to bind up my aching head, or supply the cordial or cooling draught to my parched lips. Is not every old bachelor in the same situation? Yes, as Horace says,

"Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur."

Whatever he may be made to believe, he certainly is. If he be a poor man, he is a burden upon his friends, an encumbrance which they would gladly be rid of by any means;

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if rich, his relations may smile and flatter him, but in their hearts they wish most devoutly for his death.

The married state, it is true, may be entered into with rashness and imprudence, especially in the heat and folly of youth; but in any way, it is more commendable than the selfish and unnatural principle of shunning it altogether. In the worst case that can happen to a man, which is, when his selected partner turns out to be really disagreeable, still the family which she brings him engages his affection; his happiness becomes interwoven with theirs, and if he has been unfortunate in his connubial love, he enjoys the exhilarating sensations of parental affection with the more warmth and delicacy; so that still his family becomes a kind of stay whereon to rest for worldly enjoyments, and the star by which he is directed throughout the dangerous voyage of life.

The argument, that some are unhappy in this state, is of no avail; for there are many people in the world of such refractory and turbulent dispositions, that they will be unhappy in any state, and whose tempers will ever contribute, in a certain degree, to keep every one unhappy who is connected with them. Such people would probably be still more unhappy in any other state than that of wedlock, and such commonly are one or both of the parties, who thus disagree. These are, however, only the worst cases that can happen; and though I myself am a bachelor, my opinion is fixed with respect to this. I am fully persuaded, that if there is any calm, unruffled felicity, within the grasp of an erring and imperfect creature, subject to so many passions, wants, and infirmities, it is to be found in the married state. That I have missed it, has certainly been my own blame; for I have been many times most desperately in love, and never yet met with an unfavourable reception.

The first time I fell in love was with a pretty girl who lived in our family, when I was scarce seventeen years of age.

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I never once thought of marrying her, nor even of informing her how much I loved: indeed I did not know myself what I wanted with her; but I could not stay out of her sight if it was possible for me to get into it. I always found some pretext of being where she was, though it had been only to pick a quarrel with her about some trifle. I could not endure to see any other man speak to her, or take the least notice of her whatever, and on every such occurrence wrecked my vengeance upon her.

The next time I fell in love was with one of the most lovely and amiable of the whole sex; but so far above my rank in life, that my cause appeared entirely hopeless. I however took every opportunity of being near to her, and was so overpowered with delight at seeing her, and hearing her speak, that the tears sometimes started to my eyes. I frequented the church every Sunday, and never once looked away from the front of the gallery where she sat. I commonly knew no more of what the parson was talking, than if he had been delivering himself in Greek. Nothing in nature gave me any delight that was not some way connected with her, and every thing that was so was dear to me; I heard with unspeakable delight, that, to the astonishment of the whole neighbourhood, she had positively rejected two gentlemen, each of whom had made her proposals of marriage highly advantageous.

I shall never, while recollection occupies her little tenement amongst the other powers of my mind, forget the day on which I first disclosed my passion to this dear and lovely woman! It was on the 20th of March. The day was sharp; and as I walked towards her father's mansion, I perceived her coming as if to meet me. I was wrapped in my tartan mantle, and was rather warm with walking, yet I was instantly seized with a fit of shivering. She, however, turned off at one side, and passed me at about the distance of twenty paces.

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She gave me only one look, but that was accompanied by a most bewitching smile, and went into a little summer-house. O how fain would I have followed her—but it was a piece of such monstrous rudeness to intrude upon a lady's privacy, that it quite startled me! I thought upon the look which she gave me, and the bewitching smile! Again I concluded that these were given only by chance—as she was always smiling. I spent about ten minutes in the utmost agony, resolving and re-resolving; and still she did not again make her appearance. At length, scarcely sensible, I likewise went into the little summer-house. She was sitting on one of the benches; her lovely cheek leaning on her hand; the train of her gown drawn over her shoulders; a book lay open before her; and the tears were standing in her eyes. I dare say I accosted her with a most sheepish look, saying, I was come in to see what detained her so long in that cold house, on such a sharp day. She said, that she had by chance opened that book, which was so engaging that she could not quit it; and that it had cost her some tears. I stepped to the bench, going close up to her, merely to see what book it was—I had no other motive! It was *The Vicar of Wakefield*. It is a charming work, said I, and sat down *to read it along with her*. I could not see distinctly to read with the ends of the lines turned towards me; I never could read to any purpose that way; so I was obliged to sit excessively close to her, before I could attain the right point of view. We read on—not a single word passed betwixt us for several pages, save one, which was often repeated, it was, *Now*. She commonly ran over the pages faster than I could, but always refrained from turning the leaf until I cried—*Now*. I still could not see very well, and crept a little closer to her side. I even found it necessary, in order to *see* with *precision*, to bring my cheek almost close to her's. What raptures of delight thrilled my whole frame! We read on—at least we looked over the words, without taking any heed to

them. This was the case with me, and I believe with her, for she shed no more tears. We came to the end of a chapter —"*Now*," said I; but it seems I had said it in a different way that time, for, instead of turning the leaf, she closed the book! This little adverb has many different meanings, all of which are easily distinguished by the manner of pronouncing it. "I am weary of it," said she. "'Tis time," said I. I envied not the joys of angels that day! when for the first time I found myself alone with her whom I loved and valued above all the rest of the world. I was so electrified with delight, that for a moment I believed it to be all a dream. I declared my violent affection for her, in the most respectful manner I was capable of. She did not receive the information with the smallest degree of surprise, but as something she was previously well acquainted with. I mentioned that her distinguished and admired personal excellencies, together with her elevated rank in life, had hitherto restrained me from making known my love to her; as it also entirely precluded the least chance of my ever attaining her as my wife. Think how I was astonished at receiving the following answer:—"The sea, to be sure, is very deep, but he is a great coward who dares not wade to the knee in it!" "What do you say, madam?" said I. She repeated the sentence. "But do you say this in earnest?" said I. "Indeed I do," said she, firmly, while her eyes were fixed on the ground. I clasped her to my bosom, and I do not know what extravagant nonsense I uttered amid the excess of joy with which I was transported.

During the space of three years we were seldom asunder, and enjoyed all the delights of the most pure and tender affection. I placed implicit confidence in her; and she received me always with the most enchanting kindness and good humour; and even, when she once learned that I had been paying my addresses to another, she did not in the least resent it, but observed, that it was no more than she expected; for that she knew me better than I knew myself.

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I had long been pressing her most ardently to name a day for our marriage, and at length she condescended to refer it entirely to me. Will any person, even the most dead to every sense of honour, gratitude, or love, believe that I could ever abandon this angel of a woman? To my everlasting shame and confusion, I acknowledge that I did; and it is a just award of Providence, that I now sigh for that mutual interchange of hearts, which I can no more enjoy. I first fixed on one day for our nuptials—then another—and another. I knew I was sure of her whenever I pleased, and grew more and more careless. Her behaviour to me continued the same, without the smallest abatement of cheerful condescension: never did a single murmur, or a bitter remonstrance escape from her lips, nor one frown of dissatisfaction cloud her brow: and when, at last, my total neglect threw her into the arms of another, who was more deserving of her, still her behaviour remained unchanged; and, to this day, she receives me as an old friend whom she is glad to see. May Heaven smile on that benign face, which never wore a frown but in contempt of vice or folly; and bestow upon her kind and tender heart that peace and happiness which she so well merits, and to which mine must now ever continue a stranger. I feel my loss the more keenly, by knowing it was once in my power to have enjoyed that happiness which I threw away.

I have, since that period, been several times very deeply in love; sometimes for a fortnight, sometimes for a month, but never exceeding the space of half a year. Some of my adventures with the fair sex have been so whimsical, that I do not think I can divert my readers better, than by relating as many of them as this paper will contain.

I at one time conceived a violent affection for a lady whom I chanced to accompany from Edinburgh in the stage-coach. The marked attention which I paid to her at the stages and by the way, gained so much upon her heart, that she grant-

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ed me permission to visit her, providing I kept out of her father's sight. This is not an example which I can recommend to my fair readers for their imitation; for, indeed, I think, if any of them are admitting of the visits of a lover, of whom they would be ashamed to a father or brother, they would do as well not to admit them at all. But so it was in this instance, and she could not have annexed a condition that pleased me better, as he was a haughty, proud man, and no very warm friend of mine. After many contrivances, we both agreed that the night season was the best and most convenient for us to meet. Perhaps my Edinburgh readers will be startled at this agreement; but it is a fact, that every young woman in the country must be courted by night, or else they will not be courted at all; whatever is said to them on that subject during the day, makes no more impression upon them than stocks or stones, but goes all for nothing, or mere words of course. I was so impatient for this interview, that I got very little rest until I set about it. So one dark winter night, I wrapped myself in my father's chequered plaid, mounted his bay mare, and away I rode to see this new mistress of my heart. I fastened my father's bay mare in a dell, at a distance from the house, which I approached cautiously on foot about eleven at night. As chance directed, the front door was standing open, and as I was necessitated to take some bold step, I slipped off my shoes, took them in my hand, and stole quietly up stairs into her room, where I determined to wait her arrival. It was, however, a place where, in case of a wrong individual entering, there was not the slightest screen where I could take shelter. I was not altogether at my ease—the people bustled about from one room to another—opened doors, and closed them again, each time with a most terrible noise—every one of them went to my heart like a cannon-shot. In my heart, I wished the people all in the deepest and darkest hollow

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of—their beds. My terrors increased—I durst not sit longer—so again taking my wet shoes in my hand, and my father's chequered plaid below my arm, I slipped quietly up to a garret-room filled with household articles. I was perfectly safe there, and quite at my ease, as no person slept in it; so, laying my wet shoes on the lid of a large chest, and wrapping my father's chequered plaid around my shoulders, I sat down on an old settee, laden with men's clothes on the back. I had not tarried there above three minutes, until I heard a foot coming lightly up the stair, while the approaching light let me see how thick the rafters stood which supported the roof. I was sure it was the foot of my charming maiden, for it sounded scarcely so loud as a rat's in the ceiling. I flew with joy to meet her, or to enter the room at or near the same time with herself.—O! misery, death, and destruction! Who was it?—No other than the very person, among all the sons of men, whom I dreaded! Yes, it was the young lady's father, coming straight to my garret-room without his hat and shoes, and having a large candle burning in his hand. It was all over with me—to make my escape from the garret-room was impossible; but not having one moment to lose, as a last resource, I jumped in behind the old settee, and cowred down as close as I possibly could. I saw him approaching, and marked the most deadly symptoms of revenge in every feature. He took up my wet shoes, turned them round and round in his hand with some marks of astonishment. Now, thought I to myself, what shall I do? or what shall I say? Shall I say I came to rob the house? or steal into his lovely daughter's chamber in the dark?—Any of them is bad enough—so die I must without an alternative! He turned about—came to the old settee where I had taken refuge; held over the candle———O Lord! extend thy—I won't write another word on the subject. I really meant, when I began, to

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finish this story; but, I think, I must in all conscience be sunk low enough in the esteem of my readers already; and, will it not do as well to leave the conclusion of the prayer, and the conclusion of the adventure likewise, to the imagination? and then every one will paint the conclusion as best suits his own disposition. It is visible, from my writing of this, that I escaped: so the charitable will suppose me to have escaped unhurt, determining never to engage in the like again; the licentious will suppose me violating every principle of morality, as well as the innate postulate of honour and truth planted in the human breast by the Almighty, as a guard over open, kind, and unsuspecting innocence; and taking an undue advantage over a warm and feeling heart, to make that heart for ever miserable. The malacious will suppose me dragged down stairs—horse-whipped—ducked in the water—and set at liberty. Upon the whole, I find the truth will scarcely be worse than six out of seven among all the constructions that will be put upon it, therefore, on second thoughts, it will be better to go on.—The truth then is, (for the whole story is absolute truth) that he held over the candle, and his head too; but it so happened, that either the clothes, or rather I think the beams of the candle, hindered him from seeing me. This was the greatest miracle I ever witnessed, for I was sitting perfectly open, staring him in the face like a hare, and watching, with terror, every motion of his eye. He turned the clothes over and over—selected a coat and over-alls from the heap—went down stairs whistling *Johnny Cope*, and gave me the greatest relief I ever experienced.

The lady came up shortly after—I attended her—was upbraided for my temerity—spent a short space with her in the most harmless and uninteresting chat, mostly about my getting out of the house, which was as absolutely necessary as it was notoriously dangerous. "It is next to impossible," said she, "for, as you have three bolted doors to open, the dogs will, at the

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first, be all about you; and if they do not worry you outright, will certainly awaken my father, who will have you by the neck in a moment." "I wish women never had been made," said I; "or that they had not been made so extremely beautiful, for I see they will be my ruin. But, if I were once out"——— She did not let me finish the sentence: "I'll let you out at once," said she; "you always make so much ado about nothing." Then, pushing her window gently up, which was straight above the front door, she took hold of my father's chequered plaid, and desired me to let myself down by it, while she would hold by one end until I reached the ground. She wrapped my wet shoes in the end of the plaid next her, to enable her to keep her hold, and set her knee to the wall to be ready. I crawled out, with my feet foremost, requesting her by all means to keep a good hold. "What are you afraid of?" said she; "I'll hold it if you were double the weight that you are." The window had no weights, being kept up by a catch on one side; and as it had been put gently up, the catch had only got a slight hold. What it was that agitated it, I do not know; but at the very moment on which I slid from the window, and had begun to lay my weight to the plaid, down came the window with a crack like a pistol! Whether it struck my charmer's fingers, or only startled her, was a matter of small importance to me, for I was doomed to abide by the bitter consequences either way. In short, the window and I came down precisely at the same time. The thing that I next felt, was the stone stair at the front door, on which my loin and shoulder struck with a dead thump; and at the same instant one of my shoes, which were none of the lightest, hit me on the face, and the other on the breast; for the plaid, having come off with a sudden jerk, brought them down with redoubled velocity. From the stone stair of the front door I tumbled heels-over-head down to the gravel, and took it for granted that I was dead. I was not long, however, in getting to my

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knees, in which position I remained a long time, considering whether I was killed or not. The dogs barked within the house as if a whole kennel had broken loose. The goodman threatened them loudly, and ordered silence.—The doors now began to open within. I was fain to get up, bruised as I was, and indeed I was wofully bruised, and taking my wet shoes in my hand, and my father's chequered plaid below my arm, and perceiving, to my astonishment, that all my bones were whole, I never once looked over my shoulder until I reached my father's bay mare. She was standing, capering and cocking her ears, in the dell, where she left a good many indelible marks of her impatience.

The next time I met with the young lady was in a large company, where there was a number of her own sex. After saluting them round, I turned to her—"You little mischief," said I, "what made you let go?" The mentioning of this abruptly in the midst of company, and the ludicrous scene recurring to her imagination, had the effect of throwing her into a convulsion of laughter, out of which she could not recover till obliged to retire. An explanation was asked, but that was impossible to give; and many of the party, I believe, formed conjectures of their own, which, I am sure, were all wide of the truth.

I still continued very bad in love with her; and, as I had reason, from farther experience, to be more and more terrified for her father; therefore I had nothing for it but to use some shifts to see her privately. These were not easily obtained. However, she was fond of variety, and not greatly averse to my schemes. I got a few minutes conversation with her one day, and begged her to name a time when I could call and have a private uninterrupted chat with her. She told me the thing was impossible, and she would consent to no such thing. Besides, there was not a night in the year on which her father staid from home all night, save on *the eve of*

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Lockerbie fair, when he was obliged to stay from home all night to sell his lambs; but she would not for the world that I should come that night, as there was not a man about *the town,"* (so we always denominate a farm-steading.) Delighted with this sly prohibition, I shook her hand, and bade her good bye.

O how I longed for the eve of Lockerbie fair! Does any body know what the eve of a fair day, or any other day, means? I wish the reader to settle this in his own mind before he proceeds a sentence farther, and to settle it impartially; for it is a matter that may concern him deeply to understand, and it concerns me particularly that he should understand it.

I did not take my father's bay mare with me that day, but went along the heights, carrying my gun like a fowler, but without any dog. I did not shoot any muirfowl, nor did I wish to shoot any: When I am in love, all kind of noise and disturbance are distressing to me. I love silence and solitude —to be in langsor, and think and dream of her that I admire— of all her beauties, sweets, and perfections. Imagination does very much for the women in this way; for I have myself transformed a girl, very little above ordinary, into a being of the most angelic loveliness; and have talked of her with such raptures to others, that they were obliged to view her in the same light; as no one ever disputed my good taste in female beauty. But this girl to whom I was so much attached excelled every thing. O, she was so clever—so full of animation—had such eyes, such a shape, such a smile!—Good Lord! I wondered how any man, with common feelings of humanity, could live without her! For my part, I found that I could not, and I was determined that I would not live without her, let them all do as they would.

I came at length to the hill opposite to her father's house, where I lay in a bush, and watched the doors and windows with as much anxiety as a devout heathen ever did the rising of the

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sun. If she would only but take a walk up the side of the river, thought I, I would slide down the back of the hill and meet with her; or if she walked down the river, I would follow her. But, above all, were she to take a walk up the glen, by the side of the planting. O, ye powers of love! to lead the lovely creature into that planting, far from the eyes of all living, and from her surly father's in particular—Then, to see her frown, and hear her chide, and protest that she would not go into the planting with any man on earth, far less with me, and all the while walking faster forward into the thicket than I could keep up with her. What delightful probabilities a lover fancies! She neither walked up the river that I might meet with her, nor down the river that I might follow her, nor up the glen that I might woo her in the planting; for she did not even come out of the house that I could see the whole afternoon. I saw several other females sauntering about in a careless indifferent manner, but they were coarse vulgar creatures, cast in moulds so different from that of my charmer, that they appeared rather like beings of another species. I had no patience with them; and was obliged several times to hide my face among the bent and the heather, that I might not see their round waists, and thick bare ancles as red as carrots, and thereby mar my ideas of the beauty and purity of the sex. I made several love verses while lying on the hill that evening, which I thought very good. One of them, which I made on seeing these vulgar menials going waddling about, runs thus:

"I have looked long, I have looked sore
For the girl that I do adore;
But my beloved I cannot see—
I have found but the draff where the corn should be."

Another, and perhaps a more original verse, ran thus:

"Oh! an my love were that heather-bell
That blooms upon the cowe,
Then I would take her in my arms
Like a new-clippit yowe;

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And whatsoever we did do,
To no man I would tell;
But I would kiss her rosy lips,
As I do that heather-bell."

The great art in making poetry, you will observe, is to *round the verse well off*. If the hindmost line sounds well, the verse is safe. I have never known any man who was so much master of that particular knack as myself, of which I could give many instances as well as the above, if I had leisure from more important matters.

It happened to be a particularly long afternoon that on which I lay watching for my charmer. The sun stood still about the same place for several hours, whether on account of any imperative command, or sheer ill-will, I do not know; but it is absurd to suppose that his course is regulated by any stated time. I have seen a very material difference in the celerity of his journeying. If any disbelieve me, let him ask a school boy, whether the afternoon of Friday or Saturday is the longest? Ask the maid-servant, whether the fair day, or the day that she is toiling on the harvest field, wears first or fastest to a close? but, above all, ask the lover who is sitting watching for the fall of night, that he may meet and clasp her whom he admires above all the rest of the world.

After much procrastination, the sun at last went down, and the twilight followed with slow and lingering pace. With a beating heart I again approached the house. "There will be none of these boisterous dogs here to-night," thought I; "the shepherds will be all absent at Lockerbie fair." The thought was barely formed ere I was attacked by two in a most vociferous manner, as I stood by the garden-wall cowering like a bogle. I tried to cajole them in a whisper, pretending to be friends with them. It would not do, they waxed louder and louder. I threw stones at them—they were worse than ever —"Bow—wow—wow. Yough, yough." I was obliged to take to my heels and fly, for the inmates were getting alarmed.

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The women rushed out; I heard their voices, but could not see them distinctly—my dear angel was among them. "Who can that be?" I heard one saying. "Only some passenger going home from the fair," returned she, in a voice sweeter than music. "I hope he means to ca' in," said the other, in a loud, giggling, vulgar voice; "he'll surely gi'e some o' us a bode as he gaes by." "Na, na," cried another gawky, "he hasna sae muckle in him; he's awa wi' his tail atween his legs like Macmillan's messan." My dear angel then called in the dogs, and rebuked them both by name as they passed her; and after desiring her women to keep their jokes within the walls of the house, as they knew not who might hear them, she went in last, and closed the door. Every word that she spoke thrilled my heart with delight; and I was utterly impatient for the hour of meeting—no jealous father to alarm us—no rival to interpose; not even a man-servant about the house; and as for the maids, they had a fellow-feeling for each other; and moreover, she had it in her power to make them do what she pleased.

Urged by this hopeful consideration, I was not long in returning to her window, at which I tapped lightly, my very breath almost clean gone with anxiety. She threw up the sash. I accosted her in a tremulous broken whisper—"My dear, dear Mary," said I, "have I found you alone?" "Bless me, Mr Cochrane," said she aloud, "is it you? Why do you rap at the window rather than the door? Come in, come in; my father, I dare say, will be very glad to see you." I was stupified and speechless. "There is some vile mistake here," thought I. But before I recovered, the dear teazing creature opened the door, and bidding me come in, I implicitly obeyed and followed her into the parlour.—"Where have you been, or where are you going so late?" said she. "What need have you to ask," said I, "Mary? You know well enough I am come to bear you company for a little while.

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Did not you tell me that your father and all the men were to be from home to-night?" "Me!" exclaimed she, "I never told you such a thing! I could not tell you that, for I knew it was impossible. I was afraid you would come last night; for, it being the fair eve, there was not a man about the town —the two maids were away on some business of their own, and here was I for the whole night locked up in the house, without a living soul in it but myself. Positively I do not know what I should have done, if you had come last night."

I am certain there never was another wooer looked so sheepish as I did at this moment. I was chagrined past endurance at myself, at her, and at all mankind. I saw the golden opportunity was past, and that I had run my head into a noose, and consequently I was in a violent querulous humour. She was no less so. "My dear Mary," said I, "surely you will not pretend to assert that the evening of a fair day is not the fair eve!" "Are you so childishly ignorant," returned she, "as not to know that the eve of a festival holiday, or any particular day whatever, always precedes the day nominally?" I denied the position positively, in all its parts and bearings. She reddened; and added, that "she could not help pitying a gentleman who knew so little of the world, and the terms in use among his countrymen—terms with which the meanest hind in the dale was perfectly well acquainted. "Pray, consider," added she, "do you not know that the night before a wedding, the night on which we throw the stocking, is always denominated the wedding eve? All-Hallow eve, the night on which we burn the nuts, pull the kail stocks, and use all our cantrips, is the evening before Hallowday. St Valentine's eve, and Fasten's eve, are the same. Why then will you set up your own recent system against the sense and understanding of a whole country?"

"Never tell me of your old Popish saws and customs; the whole of your position is founded in absurdity, my love," said

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I. "This, you know, is the evening of the fair day—the fair is doubtless going on as merrily as ever; this then must either be the fair eve, or else the fair has two eves, which is rather more than either common sense or use and wont will warrant."

I found I had acted very wrong; for by this time anger was depicted on her lovely countenance, and I saw plainly that she had a smithy spark of temper in her constitution.

"I could go farther back, and to higher authority, than old Popish saws, as you call them, for the establishment of my position, if I chose," said she; "I could take the account of the first formation of the day and the night, where you will find it recorded, that 'the *evening* and the morning were the first day;' but as it would be a pity to mortify one by a confutation who is so wise in his own conceit, I therefore give up the argument. You are certainly in the right; and may you always profit in the same way as you have done now, by sticking to your own opinion."

This was a severe one; and in the temper and disposition that I was in, not to be brooked. "Nothing can be more plain," said I, "than that the evening of a day is the evening of that day."

"Nothing can," said she.

"And, moreover," said I, "has not the matter been argued thoroughly by our christian divines?"

"It has," said she.

'And have not they all now agreed, from St Chrysostom down to Ebenezer Erskine, that the Sabbath-day begins in the morning?"

"They have," said she.

"And if the Sabbath begins in the morning, so must also Monday; and so must every day, whether fair day or festival."

"There is no doubt of it at all," said she; "wherefore reason any more about the matter? Here is my father coming,

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we shall appeal to him, and he will, without doubt, ratify all that you have been saying." Her father now entered; for he had been all the while in the next room settling his fair accounts. His eyes were heavy with fatigue, and his face red with sun-burning and whisky punch—a most ungainly figure he was. "Humph!" said he, as he came in, "wha hae we gotten here?" "It is Mr Cochrane, sir, who stepped in on his way home from the moors to get the news of the fair; but what argument think you he has taken up? he will not let me say that this is the fair eve." "Neither it is, Miss," said he, "any body knows that the night afore the fair is the fair e'en." "I can hardly trow that you are right, sir," said she. "Nor can I, upon my honour," said I. "Ye canna, upon your honour, can ye no? Humph! sic honour! Fine honour, faith! Crocks wad craw an duds wad let them. Ye're unco late asteer, I think, the night, chap.—Whar hae ye been scatterin focks sheep the day?" I assured him that I had molested no one's sheep, for that my dog had left me, and that I had had very little sport.

"Sport! snuffs o' tobacco!" exclaimed he, "to hear some folk tauk o' sport that it wad suit better to be weeding their minnie's kail-yard, or clouting their ain shoon.

"Humph! fine sport, faith! Ye surely hae unco little to do at hame." I could hardly sit all this, but unwilling to break, both with the old gentleman and her I loved so passionately at once, I restrained myself, and answered him in a forced jocular manner. We got some supper; and the young lady proposed that we should drink a jug of toddy together afterwards, but this he positively declined, saying that I would be too late before I got home. This was as broad a hint for me to go about my business as could be given, and I would have been obliged to have taken it, had not sheer good manners compelled the young lady to propose that I should take a bed till the morning. Thinking this offer augured well,

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and that I would still be favoured with a private conference, I accepted of the proposal; but, without the possibility of getting another private word of her, I was shewn to my bed.

It was on the same floor with that of my charmer; her father's, as is before mentioned, being on the ground floor. I thought it behoved me, after coming so far to see her, to make an attempt at a private interview, and had no doubt but that she intended it, when she urged me to stay, notwithstanding the ill humour we both were in about the fair eve. I only threw off my coat and shoes, and laid me down on my bed; but to think of sleeping, so situated, was out of the question.

I lay till near midnight, when all was quiet, and not so much as a mouse stirring; then rose, put on my coat, and groped my way with great caution to her room, weening that she would have lain down without undressing like myself; but I was mistaken. I waked her—she pretended great astonishment and high displeasure, but always spoke below her breath. She said I was mad—and that it was fine behaviour in sooth—and a great number of such kind of things. I said still a greater number of the most extravagant things that ever were spoke, to all of which she only replied, "go away to your bed, I tell you." "My dear divine Mary," said I, "as you know you are safe from insult in my company at all times, and in all situations, therefore why not suffer me to remain a while with you?"

"Because my father is jealous of us, and your peril, as well as mine, is very great. I must first remove that jealousy, and then you may come as often as you will," she replied.

"O, for Heaven's sake, do remove that jealousy! I'll come every night to see you," said I.

"You must then abide by the consequences," she returned.

"I will abide by any consequences, for the sake of enjoying your sweet company without interruption," said I.

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"Well then," she returned, "I entreat that, in the first place, you will behave as you ought to do, and go to your bed. You *shall* go to your bed, I insist on it—you might have come on the fair eve, as a true lover and a man of sense would have done."

"So I have, my dear, I have come on the fair eve;" said I.

I fear this was an unfortunate speech of mine, for, short as it was, it led to very disagreeable consequences. I declare I had no more intention of going into the bed beside the young lady, than I had of again letting myself out at her window. I wanted only to have a private conference, for I loved her to distraction, and the most that I would have ventured would have been to have put my arm round her waist, and perhaps kissed her hand or her cheek. But at this luckless time, my arm happened to be flung over her shoulder above the clothes; at which, being offended, she flung back away from me. Thinking this was all a pretence, and that she wanted to make room for me—what could I do? I certainly did make a lodgement on the foreside of the bed. I was confoundedly mistaken, for at that moment my ears were saluted by a distant tinkling sound; but I thought they themselves were ringing, my spirits being in such commotion, and I paid no attention to the portentous sound. My charmer fled farther away from me, and I followed proportionally, still keeping, however, a due distance. The ill-set creature had a bell-handle at the back of her bed, which I little dreamed of, and far less that she would make any use of such a thing if she had. I had never found it the nature of the fair sex to be ready in exposing the imprudencies of their lovers, if committed for the sake of their own persons; therefore my astonishment may be judged of, when I heard a distant bell ringing fiercely and furiously. "Good God!" said I, "What's that?" She had not time to answer me, when her father entered, half dressed, and apparently only half awake, carrying a lighted candle, before which he held his open hand lest it should go out, and

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at the same time stared over above it, with open mouth, and his night-cap raised on his brow. "Mary, my dear, what is the matter? what do you want?" said he. "I want you, sir, to shew this gentleman back to his bed-room," said she. "He has come here by some mistake, and refuses to go away. He even insists on lying in the same bed with me, a freedom which I *will not* admit of." "Fine behaviour, faith!" said the old savage, but not in particularly bad humour. He seemed pleased with his daughter's intrepidity, whom hitherto, I suppose, he had trusted but very little in love matters; and not less pleased to find me exposing myself in such a base manner, for which I could have no excuse. "Humph!" continued he, "you did very right, daughter. Fine honour, faith! come awa, chap, an' I'll shew you a gate that will set ye better. Humph! my certy! ye're ane indeed." "I hope, my dear sir," said I, "you cannot suspect me of any dishonourable intentions towards your daughter, whom, I declare, I love better than my own life!" "Humph! fine love, faith! Come awa; sic love canna stand words." So saying, the old hound seized me by the collar behind, and began to drag me away. "What do you mean, sir?" said I; "I'll not be handled in this manner—I'll fight you, sir." "O, to be sure you will," returned he. "So will I—I'll fight too; but we maun do ae thing afore another, ye ken." And then, with a ruder grasp, he dragged me down the stair, quite choaked by the gripe he had of my collar, and scarcely able to move my limbs. "It is your own house, sir," said I, "else I would beat you most unmercifully—I would beat you like a dog." "Oh, to be sure, you would," said he; "there's nae doubt o't ava." He then pushed me out at the door, giving me a furious kick behind; and then closing the door with a loud clash, he bolted it on the inside.

I was perfectly deranged, at having thus made a fool of myself; and, like all men who make a fool of themselves, I made

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a still greater fool of myself. I turned in a horrid rage, and ran to his window. "Give me out my clothes, you old dog," I cried. "Give me out my shoes, my hat, my plaid, and my gun, or I'll break every window and floor in your house, you old ragamuffin scoundrel that you are!" Clink went one pane of the window—jingle went another—I then heard a step inside, and, on pricking up my ears, I heard these words, "By G— I will give it him." This brought me a little to my senses. I stood aside for a few seconds, and listening, I heard a window of the second flat opened softly, and soon beheld between me and the sky, the muzzle of a gun coming sliding out. It was needless to bid me take to my heels: so I turned the corner and ran with main speed. The noise I made had awakened the shepherds who slept in the stable, and just as I ran past the door, out sallied two men and four dogs on me. "Seize that rascal, and duck him," cried their master, setting his head out at the window, "he has broken up the house." The two fellows ran after me; but I redoubled my speed; and being ready stripped for the race, I left them a considerable space behind. For some time the chase continued down a level valley, on which I had the heels of them, as the saying is, considerably; but, on leaving that, we came to rough boggy ground interspersed with some sheep-drains. I then heard the panting and blowing of one of the shepherds, who had gained ground, and was coming hard on me. The other was quite behind; and was laughing so immoderately that he could make little speed. I cast a hurried glance behind me, and saw a large brawny rascal within a dozen yards of me, who was bare-headed and bare-legged, and had a huge two-handed staff heaved above his right shoulder. I strained every nerve; and coming to a steep place, I went down it with inconceivable velocity. My pursuer did the same; but either his body came faster down than his feet could keep up with, or, what is as probable, he had set his

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foot inadvertently, in the height of his speed, into a drain, for down he came with such force, that he actually flew a long way in the air like a meteor before he alighted, and then pitched exactly on his nose and forehead. With such an unwonted force did he fly forward, after losing his equilibrium, that the staff, which he carried above his shoulder, came by me with a swithering noise like that made by a black-cock on the wing at full flight. I suppose he quitted it in his swing, in order to save his face by falling on his hands. Hard as my circumstances were, I could not help laughing at my pursuer's headlong accident; but I lifted the cudgel, and fled as fast as I could. Whether he was hurt, or only had his wind cut by his fall, I know not, but I saw no more of him. About a mile farther on I heard their voices behind me, but they were not so near as to alarm me, and besides, I was in possession of the club, which I had resolved to make use of, if attacked.

When out of danger, I deliberated calmly on what had passed. I deemed myself very ill used—most shabbily used! and my first emotions were toward a stern and ample revenge. But when I began to question myself about my motives, and answer these questions strictly according to the dictates of honour and conscience, I found that the answers did not entirely satisfy me; and I was not so sure whether I had received any thing beyond my deserts or not. "What were you going to do with the girl, George? Did you mean honourably by her?" "Oh, strictly." "That is, you positively intended to make her your wife?" "No." I searched every crevice of my heart out and in, and could not say that I did. But then, I could not be happy out of her company—in short, I loved her. Was not that quite sufficient? Will said it was—honour said not much about it; but conscience whispered the old father's saying into my heart, "Fine love, faith!"

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"Suppose you had a lovely and beloved daughter, George, and found a young fellow, of whose principles and honour you did not much approve, who had stolen clandestinely into her bed-chamber, and, in spite of remonstrance, was even making his way into her bed, what would you have done with him? Aye, there's the rub! That brings the matter home at once! Cut his throat to be sure; besides stabbing him in different parts of the body. Fine love, faith!"

The thing that chagrined me most of all, was an indistinct recollection, that while the father was dragging me out of the room like a puppy by the neck, and I was threatening to fight him, I heard my sweetheart tittering and laughing. This almost drove me mad—it looked so like a set plan to make a fool of me. Yet I could not believe but that I had received some proofs of her attachment—proofs that I had a preference in her esteem, or she must be a very extraordinary girl. "Perhaps," thought I again, "all this shame and obloquy has sprung from the contradiction I gave her about *Lockerbie fair eve*. But, say that this is the case, it argues very little for her prudence or good sense." Upon the whole, I found my admiration of her mixed with a little bitterness, and I formed some resolutions concerning her, not the most generous, nor the most commendable in the world.

Next morning I appeared at breakfast with a sullen, dissatisfied look. "Sauf us! Geordie, what ails ye the day?" said my mother, "ye look at a' things as ye coudna help it. An' guid forgi'e us! what hae ye made o' your hat, that ye are gaun wi' that auld slooch about your lugs? an' hae ye tint your shoon, that ye maun be strodgin about i' your boots?" I did not know how to satisfy my mother's curiosity, far less how to recover my apparel, without exposing myself and all concerned to both families; so, in the first place, I was obliged to contrive a manifest lie to pacify my mother. I told her, that while I was out on the moors, on such and such a

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height, by came William Tweedie's hounds hard after a fox; and that, in order to keep up with them, I had thrown away my plaid, shoes, hat, coat, and gun, and followed them all the way to Craigmeken Skerrs, where the hounds lost the foot; but on returning, it was that dark, that I found it impossible to get my clothes and gun; I had, however, left word with some of the shepherds, who I trusted would find them.

That same day there was a small packing-box left at the shop near by, directed to a man in Moffat, with a card for me. It was in these terms: "M. I.'s comp^ts to Mr C., sends the clothes in box. Will hide the gun till owner calls. No one shall know. Is sorry the consequences turned out so severe. Jealousy now asleep for ever. Mr C. needs not be in a hurry in taking advantage of this. When he does, let him throw a handful or two of gravel against a certain window."

"Woman's an inexplicable thing!" said I to myself; "Is it possible that the minx has exposed me to this shame and indignity, merely to lull asleep all jealousy in her father's breast with respect to me, that we may in future enjoy one another's company without fear or interruption. The thing is beyond my comprehension! She certainly is an extraordinary, and rather a dangerous girl this! However, I'll go and see her once more, and if I have such opportunities as I have had I shall make better use of them."

I was much pleased with her ingenuity in sending me my clothes; but the more I studied her, the less I could make of her character; yet she was a charming girl, nevertheless! It was not long till I again mounted my father's bay mare at night, and rode away to see her; and, as she had given me the hint, when all was quiet I went and threw two handfuls of sand against her bed-room window. It was not long before she looked out, and, on seeing who it was, she made a sign with her hand to the door. I threw off my shoes and hid them, and then went to the door, where soon the dear delightful

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creature came, and opened it so softly, that I did not hear it, though standing at the landing-place, or *door-step*, as they call it there. Without speaking a word, she took me by the hand, pulled me in, and closed the door, but did not bolt it for fear of noise; then leading me up the stair, she ushered me darkling into her room, into that room where I had suffered so severely twice before, and which I did not enter again without trepidation and some uneasy apprehensions. She was elegantly dressed in a white night-gown, with a handsome house cap on her head, garnished with ribbons. I held her by the hand, and as I looked in her face, by the help of the moon that shone on her casement, I thought her the handsomest creature on earth. I sat down on a chair, and took her on my knee, clasping my arms around her waist. She made no resistance to this arrangement of position, amorous as it was; and to make it still worse, she leaned her head on my shoulder. I said many extravagantly fond things, to which she made no reply. Her behaviour always led me into errors. I deemed that the position in which we were placed, warranted me in snatching a kiss from those sweet delicious lips that were actually shedding the fragrance of roses and honey-suckle warm on my cheek; so I made the attempt. No—no such liberties could be granted. "I disapprove of kissing altogether," said she; "and cannot tell you how much I admire the substitute resorted to by a certain valued friend of mine. Have not you heard of one, who, in cases of necessity, kissed a heather cowe?" I declared I never had: On which she repeated these two lines, with a softness and pathos that made them more ridiculous than aught I had ever heard:

> "Then I would kiss her rosy lips,
> As I do that heather bell!!!"

"Where the devil did you come by that?" said I. "No

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matter how I got it," replied she; "I get many things that you are not aware of." "I believe you never said a truer thing in your life," said I; "I always thought you were a witch. But surely you will grant me a kiss of that comely cheek, which is a small boon; after I have come so often and so far to see you, you cannot refuse me when I ask so little?" "O yes!" said she, with a deep feigned sigh,

"Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long."

"The devil is in this girl!" thought I to myself; "she is quite beyond my depth. I know not what to make of her!" I sat silent for some time, considering what she could mean. At that instant I thought I heard a kind of distant noise in the house, and at the same time I observed that she was holding in her breath in the act of listening. I was going to ask her what it was; but she prevented me by laying her hand on my mouth, and crying "hush!" I then distinctly heard footsteps on the stair. "Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed she, in a whisper, "there, I believe, is my father! What shall we do? For God's sake hide." The approach of the devil would have been nothing to me in comparison to that of the old desperate ragamuffin, in the situation I then was, so in a moment I was below the bed, where I found things in bad order, and besides, very little room for me. She slid into her bed straight above me, covered herself with the sheets, and fell a sniffing, as if in the most profound sleep. "What a delightful ingenious creature she is," thought I to myself; "now I shall hear how nicely she will bring us off." The door of the room opened; but, as I judged, too softly to be opened by her father, and the steps came over the floor, apparently, with all the caution the walker was master of, though his skill was not exquisite in that most necessary acquirement in night-wooing. He came close to the bed-side, and tried, in

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vain for a long time, to waken the dear deceitful creature, who at length was pleased to awake with many smothered exclamations of astonishment and high resentment. At length I heard her say, "Scott, is it you?" "Yes, to be sure it is," said he. "For shame!" exclaimed she; "how have you the impudence to come into a solitary girl's chamber at this time of night? I assure you, it is a freedom of which I will not admit; and therefore, if you wish that I should ever speak to you again, go away this instant without saying another word." "God save the king, Mary!" said he; "What's the matter w'ye the night? just as ane was never here afore." "I beg you will take notice what you say, sir," said she, "and begone instantly, else I'll ring the bell." "You had better go away, friend," thought I, "and be thankful she has given you warning—she'll be as good as her word, and ring the bell with a vengeance." "Suffer me one moment to explain," said the lover, in a most suppliant tone, for he seemed to know the danger of the ground on which he was treading. "I will not suffer a word," said she, "from one who treats me in this manner. I'd have you to know your distance and keep it. If I am consulted, and choose to admit a gentleman to a private tete-a-tete, that is all very well. I hope I know what freedoms I should admit of in such cases, and what not. But I will not have my privacy intruded upon in this manner if you were a prince of the realm; and so, instantly, I say, go about your business."

"Well, upon my word, the girl speaks excellent good sense," thought I; "and I hope the fellow will go away. When he does, O how dearly I will caress the spirited, dear, ingenious creature!" "Well, I must go away, since you insist on it," said he. "Ay, pray do," said I to myself; "the sooner the better," "But, as some excuse for my behaviour," continued he, "I must tell you before I go, that, as I set out for the English market on Monday, and cannot see you

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again for six or seven weeks, I came to take leave of you, and bid you good-bye for a little while. I intended to have wakened you in the way you prescribed; but finding the hall door open, which is not usual, I thought I would come in and awake you myself." "Well, you are very kind," said she, "and I am obliged to you; but you have done very wrong, therefore pray go away, as I have particular reasons for desiring your absence to-night." "And so have I, sir, if you please," thought I. I think that at this time she had put out her arm to push him away from the side of the bed, for I heard him say, with evident symptoms of surprise, "Bless me, Mary, you are dressed! In full dress too!—ruffled at hands and neck! Why are you sleeping with your clothes on? Oh! I see! I see! Yes, you have particular reasons for desiring my absence to-night indeed! You are waiting for some other lover, and have left the door open for him. You need not deny it, for the thing is perfectly evident. But I shall disappoint him for once, for I will not go away to-night." "But, friend," thought I, "could I but reach the handle of the bell at the back of the bed, which perhaps is not impossible from this situation, I should get you a dismissal you are little dreaming of." "And will you indeed presume to stay here without my approval?" said she; "or dictate to me about my lovers? Once you have me under control, you may—leave me instantly." "Well, if you force me to go away, I will watch him at the door." "Watch him where you please, but you may watch in vain—leave the room." "I never saw you so very cross as you are to-night, my beloved Mary, and I am sorry for it; for I had a great many things to talk to you about. But, if you will but suffer me to remain five minutes, I protest I'll ask no more, and I will then go quietly home, and neither watch your door nor window." "Well, as you positively promise to go away at the end of five minutes, I'll indulge you for once; but suffer me to rise,

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for I do not like to converse with a gentleman in this guise." "I do not see any harm in it." "Perhaps not; nor do I think there is much; but it looks so careless and indelicate that I never can submit to it."

She arose; and as there happened to be only one chair in the room, they were obliged to sit down on the side of the bed. The stock being higher than the matress, it was impossible to sit on it; so, after all, they were obliged to lean across the bed. I heard every word that passed with distinctness, and as the lover declared that he had things of great importance to say to her, I took particular note of them, and shall here give the conversation of a lover who had only five minutes to spend with his mistress, and was not to see her again for two months.

"Well now, after all, we are lying upon the bed; so you might as well have remained where you were."

"I do not think it half so bad to lean across a bed as to lie at full length upon it."

"A woman's whimsie!"

"Say that it is a whimsie: such whimsies as have no evil tendency you may grant us. But the truth is, that I disapprove of the whole system of wooing by night, and heartily wish it were out of fashion, which I am told it is in every district of the kingdom but this."

"I hope it never will be out of fashion here."

"And why, pray?"

"Because, in the first place, it is always so delightful."

"Not always, friend," thought I; "if you were in my situation, you would feel otherwise."

"And, in the next place, one hears his sweetheart's mind much more explicitly."

"I am not sure of that, Mr Scott," thought I.

"And, in the third and last place, all our fathers courted that way—our mothers were courted that way—every farmer's wife in the three shires has been courted in that way, save a

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few of a very late date, and I should be sorry to see such a good old established system exploded."

"I have been always told these things, but I do not give credit to them."

"They are, however, true. I have heard the matter disputed by some pretenders to refinement, and to that false delicacy for which the age is notorious; and I have heard it proved to my entire satisfaction, and many curious anecdotes besides, relating to it. Laird K——y of Ch——k——t courted his lady many a night in the hay-mow of her father's cow-house, and she was wont to milk him a jug of sweet milk before he set out on his journey home. The Laird of S——n——e courted his lady in the woods by night, and sometimes among his father's growing corn, who accused him very much of the broadness of the lairs that he made; and he is one of the first landward lairds of the country. The reverend minister of K——m——l courted his wife in her mother's dairy, in the dark; and once in attempting to kiss her, his wig fell into a pail of milk, and was rendered useless. The old woman got a terrible fright with it, when about to skim the milk next morning. All the seven large farmers in the upper part of our parish courted their wives in their own bed-chambers; and I have heard one of them declare, that he found the task so delightful, that he drew it out as long as he could with any degree of decency. My father did the same, and so did yours; ask any of them, and they will tell you. And besides, is it not delightful, the confidence that it displays in the indelible virtue of daughters, sweethearts, &c.?"

"Say rather, the carelessness of their virtue that it displays. I know, from my own experience, that it is impossible for a girl who allows it not to be placed in some very disagreeable dilemmas."

"Oh, you allude to your late adventure with Geordie Cochrane? Upon my word, you served him as he deserved!

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I never was so much pleased and diverted with any thing that ever I heard in my life."

"Geordie Cochrane's very much obliged to you, neighbour," thought I; "and he may, perhaps, live to be even with you yet."

"Say not a word about Mr Cochrane, sir; for I will not suffer one of my lovers to slander another of them to my face. When he comes back, he may possibly be as much inclined to talk about you."

"Him! He speak of me! If he durst, I would claw the puppy-hide of him! He is as great a skype as I know of."

I heard the little imp like to burst into laughter as he said this, and that all the while she was trying to stop him by holding her hand upon his mouth, for the sentences came out piecemeal and in vollies.

"I would rather see you married on any ploughman, or —(bhoo—cease!)—tailor or weaver—(bhoo, give over I tell you) in the country. No man or woman can depend on a word he says, he's the greatest liar (bhoo-oo-oo)"

"D—n the fellow!" said I to myself, "could I but reach the handle of the bell, I would astonish him." I struggled all I could to reach it.

"What is that below the bed?" said he.

"It is our old dog Help, poor fellow, that I often keep with me to bear me company, and be a kind of guardian against intruders like you. Help, go away, you old slyboots; it behoves you well to lie there, and listen to all that passes between my lover and me."

This gave me a little toleration to move, and I struggled more and more to reach the handle of the bell. I was almost smothered to death, while another was lying in the arms of my mistress; so I was determined to suffer the base intruder no longer. But all that I could do, I could not reach the handle of the bell, or rather I could not find it.

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"Lie still, Help," cried she, "and be at peace; and I'll let you out in two minutes." I thought I would suffer a little longer for the sake of her dear company; so, wiping my dripping brows, I composed myself to my state of sufferance as well as I could. The important courtship of the lovers terminated here, and I heard, from what they said, that they were greatly alarmed at something they heard below. "Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed the lady; "Who can it be? It is some one speaking to my father in at the window!" I listened as attentively as I could—they did the same—and at length I heard the old farmer say, "watch ye the door, an' I'll gang up an' see what I can see." "Now, friend," thought I, "is your turn come; and if you do not get it I am mistaken." He had just time to spring from the bed, and shut himself into a corner press, before the lady's father entered. Mary had hastily composed her decent form on the bed, and pretended to be sound asleep. He came forward, and with some difficulty awaked her; while she seemed to be much frightened and discomposed, and asked what he wanted? "I want," said he, "to see if there is any body with you." "Any body with me, father!—what do you mean? You see there is nobody here." "I dinna understand that, Miss. Aedie, our herd, tells me, that he saw that silly profligate thing, Geordie Cochrane, come riding this way after the gloaming; and that his beast is standing tied at the back of the dike just now."

"It is not likely he would come here after the last reception he got; but take no notice of it, he will be with some of the maids, and he'll go away as he came," said she.

"A fine story, faith! that he would be with ony o' the maids, an' kens the gate here! deil tak' him, gin I catch him here again hingin' o'er my bairn, like a hungry tod o'er a weel-nursed lamb, an' I dinna pu' the harrigalds out o' him!" So saying, by a natural impulse, which led him to the only

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door that was in the room except the one he entered by, he tried to open the door of the press; but it resisted his pull, although it was not quite close. When he found this, he made it come open with such fury, as if he would have pulled down the house, and there stood his old acquaintance Scott, staring him in the face like a hunted wild cat from its den. "L—d have a care o' us!" said the old farmer; but, before he had time to articulate another word, the lover burst by him, and, running down stairs, made for the door. On the outside of the door there stood the staunch shepherd with his club, who, thinking it was me that was coming on him with such rapidity, determined to have a hearty blow at me, and no sooner did Mr Scott set his head out at the door, than he hit him on the links of the neck with such force, that he was laid flat on the gravel, and the shepherd above him with his knees and elbows. The old farmer followed, and I suspect that between the two, Scott got but very rough treatment, for there was a terrible affray before the door for some time, and a great deal of oaths going. He must certainly have been hard put to it, for I heard him saying, "If you won't let wooers come to see your daughter, d—n you, keep her, and make a table-post of her. I'm as good as she, or any of her kin,—d—n you; keep her, and make a tea-cannister of her, if you like." "A bonny story, faith!" said the old farmer.

I now began to drag myself out of my hole, anticipating the most delicious morning's courtship with my jewel that ever man enjoyed; but she begged me to lie still until I heard how matters settled, and regretted, as a pernicious business, the discovery made of my horse. I thought the old rascal could never once dream that there was another lover in the chamber, and therefore considered myself as perfectly safe. However, up he came again. "Mary," said he, "the herd assures me that Cochrane is here." And without wait-

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ing for any reply, he went to the press, and examined it more minutely; then, kneeling down on his hands and knees, he lifted the curtain, and peeped beneath the bed. He did not speak a word on making the joyful discovery; but, observing where my feet lay, he set down the candle, hastened to the end of the bed, and, seizing me by the two feet, soon had me lying on my back in the middle of the floor.

"Deil pike out my een," said he, "gin ever I saw the like o' this sin' my mother bure me! Gude-faith, ye hae been playing at hide-an'-seek here! Chap, what think ye o' yoursel, now?"

"Whatever I may think of myself," said I, "it is apparent that I think more of some one else, that I have ventured so much for her." "Fine government, faith!" said he, while all the time holding me by the feet, with one on each side of him, so that I could not move, but lay on my back, and looked him in the face; and, for the first time, I perceived to my astonishment, that he seemed to watch Mary's eye for the regulation of his behaviour towards me. "What say you to it, Miss? What have you to say for yourself?" "I have nothing to say either for or against myself; but for the gentlemen, I must say that they are both gone mad." "Ay, and waur than mad!" cried he, encouraged by this remark of Mary's. "It is a mischievous madness theirs. Ane creeps into ae corner, an' another into another, to watch a poor bit innocent sleeping lassie, and a' to be her ruin; it can be for nought else. May the ill thief be my landlord, chap, gin I dinna bury my fit in ye up to the instep." I was still lying in the same posture as before—the most awkward one in which a lover could be introduced to his mistress's father, or herself either, and had no power to help or defend myself. Had he given me the kick he meditated, he had finished my course; but Mary raised her hand—which chained him still in a moment! "Hold!" said she, "let Mr Cochrane go; I want to speak with him."

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He dropped my legs that instant, and I was not long in getting on my feet. "What!" said he, "and leave him here with you?" "If you please, sir." The old farmer, although he was in very bad humour, actually turned round at the first word, on purpose to leave me with his lovely daughter. I never was so much astonished in all my life.

"Humph!" said he, "fine wark, faith! Od, dame, ye coudna stand this an' ye waur made o' bell-metal."

"Speak, my dear father," said she, softly—and he turned about.

"You know, though I am perfectly innocent of their coming here, yet were you to turn out Mr Cochran now, it would expose me to the servants in a most ridiculous light, and actually ruin me. So, go away and deny that he is here. You surely are not afraid to leave me with any of them?" "I'm nae fear't for ony imprudence, lassie; and I'm nae fear't ye *do* aught that's wrang; but it's your mind that I'm rad for; they'll gie't a wrang swee, thae chaps. Od, they'll pit ye daft! Weel, weel; ye may tak your crack there, sin it maun be sae." And away he went, closed the door, and left us to improve the subject in any way we liked.

"Well, my dear Mary," said I, standing like one petrified, and in the dark, "of all the things I ever witnessed this has surprised me the most; for I always imagined that your father tyrannized over you, and kept you in check, which made you the more willing to over-reach him when opportunity served."

"You never were more deceived in your life, then," said she; "I am frequently obliged to make use of my father to expel those idle young gentlemen who come about me; often merely, as I suspect, to amuse themselves. He is proud of the trust; and often on such occasions assumes very high ground; but my will is his; and he has no wish but mine in such cases. I never expose my lovers to any insult from my father, unless

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for very good reasons; and I am sometimes driven to shifts to prevent them running their heads together; but I never yet conversed with a lover that I did not inform him of, as well as what I thought of the lover's motives in paying his addresses to me."

"I stand on ticklish ground here," thought I; "therefore must take good care what I say or propose, in a case like this. As the sailor said to his captain, 'No sham here, by G—.'" "Mary," said I, "you astonish me still more! But was it not rather hard to give me such a passport out of the house, as you did that night?"

"No;" said she, "I thought you deserved it. You might have observed, that whenever I desired you to stay all night, my father said no more, but talked to you as a welcome guest; and I thought you were wronging his hospitality, and infringing on the honour of his house, when you left your chamber without leave, and came into that of his daughter."

"You are an extraordinary girl, Mary," said I, "and I can't approach you, even in the dark, but with a kind of fear and trembling. But, the devil! you did not tell him of the drop scene surely?"

"Every thing concerning it. He knew you were in the house that night—and that you were in the garret; but did not choose to see you, till he knew if it was by my appointment."

"I think," said I, "you may take for your motto, 'Wha dare middle wi' me.' Pray, may I ask if it was by chance, or through design, that you gave me such a tumble from the window?"

She was again moved to irresistible laughter. "I beg," said she, "that you will not mention that subject again, for I have many a time laughed at it already till nearly exhausted."

"Upon my word, I'm very much obliged to you, Miss."

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"I meant to give you a slight fall; but not by half such a serious one. It was an accident that made me lose my hold at the first, and I was greatly alarmed till I saw you rise and run halting away; then I went to my bed, and laughed almost the remainder of the night. The awkward way that you fell, with your shoes rattling about your head—the astounded and ill-natured manner in which you rolled yourself over and over on the gravel—the length of time you sat considering, and, as I believed, cursing my slim fingers—the noise of dogs and men within doors, and the limping mode in which you made your escape, have altogether left such an impression of the ludicrous on my mind as shall never be erased. Never shall I see any thing so exquisite again! Whenever I am down-hearted, I have only to think of that night to make me merry. I have gained a great deal of credit by it; for whenever I wish to laugh at the stories of any old prosing gentleman, or intolerable dowager, I think of your acute escape from my window, and laugh most unfeignedly, by which I have several times been praised as a most acute sensible girl."

"It is a subject," said I, "on which I never felt any inclination to be merry; and when I furnish you with another divertisement, I sincerely hope it may be by some *less feeling* exhibition. I suspect that you are an exquisite wag."

"I do not think the scene of this present night was much behind the other," said she. "Indeed, it is such a one that I dare not trust myself a moment to think about it; but, once I have the incidents all collated and arranged, I am sure I shall have many a hearty laugh at it. Being very lonely here, I like a little diversion with the fellows now and then."

Afterwards we began a conversing about a Moffat ball that we had both been at, and about the various characters that were there, which served us for a topic of conversation until the time of my dismissal; and this terminated two night-courtships, without a word of love. I was ashamed of this

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when I thought of it; for it was a neglect that never used to be the case with me; but I do not know how I was led away from the subject. I believe that girl could have led a man to converse on any subject, or kept him off any, she pleased. I left her with a much higher idea of her character than ever I had before, and was vexed that I had made such a poor use of the time so graciously afforded me.

But I am an unfortunate man; and my love affairs had not been to prosper; for hanging and marrying, they say, go by destiny. One would have thought that the favour shewn me by this lady, and the confidence reposed in me, both by herself and father, bespoke a preference in my favour. I thought so myself, and was very proud of it; not having the least doubt but that I could get my beloved Mary for the asking. How wofully was I mistaken! Just as I was contemplating another journey to see her, I received the following letter:

"Sir,

"I have taken into serious consideration your visiting here clandestinely, and sorely repent me for encouraging it. If I have judged aright of your motives, such visits may lead to evil, but can never lead to good; therefore, I beg that you will discontinue them. To convince you that I am serious, I must tell you, in confidence, that I have now promised my hand to another, who, if he has less merit, has more generosity than you, for he asked it.

"Your most obedient servant, M. T."

I read the letter twenty times over, and could scarcely believe my eyes. It cut me to the bone. I certainly had never asked her hand in marriage, nor even once mentioned the subject. She had taken it ill; but it was a subject that I never was very rash in proposing; for, in truth, it was not very convenient for me. My father and mother were both living in

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the same house with myself, and I had no separate establishment. However, I could not think of losing the dear creature, so I wrote a passionate love-letter, proposing marriage off-hand; and, after I had sent it away, I trembled for fear of its being accepted. However, the letter, though it had been opened and read, was returned to me, enclosed in a blank cover; so I found all chance of succeeding in that quarter was gone for ever. She was married to a young farmer on the December following.

The next time that I fell in love was at a Cameronian sacrament, with a tall, lovely, black-eyed girl, the most perfect picture of health and good-nature that I had ever seen. Her dress I could not comprehend, as it was rather too gaudy and fine for a farmer's daughter, and yet the bloom of her cheek bespoke her a country maiden. I watched her the whole day from the time that I first got my eyes upon her, and asked at every one I knew who she was; but no one could tell me. On such occasions, persons often meet whose places of abode are a hundred miles from each other; from such a distance round do they assemble to this striking and original exhibition.—For my own part, I would have enjoyed it very much, had it not been for this bewitching creature, who quite unhinged all my devotional feelings. There was scarcely a young man's eye in the congregation that was not often turned on her, for she had a very striking appearance. I could not help thinking that there was something light in her behaviour; but the liquid enamel of her black eye was irresistible, and I felt that I was fairly in love with I knew not whom. All that I could learn of her was, that some person called her *Jessy;* and I watched which way she went at even. I perceived, likewise, that she lived at a great distance, from the early hour at which she left the meeting. I could not get her out of my mind for days and months. I went to every kirk and market in the bounds toward which she went, but could neither

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see nor hear of her for upwards of eight months. At length I discovered her at a great hiring fair on the Border the spring following.

I watched her the whole day as before, but having scarcely any acquaintances there, I had no means whatever of learning any thing about her rank, her name, or where she lived. About one o'clock, I chanced to meet with a gentleman who had often bought sheep from my father and myself, whose name was Mr John Murray of Baillie-hill, and whose company I loved very much. He proposed that we should dine together, to which I gladly consented. There was a Mr Bell and a Mr Moffat with us, both Eskdale gentlemen, whom I had never seen before; but they were both jolly, good-natured, honest fellows, and we plied the bottle rather freely. I got so much exhilarated by the drink, that I told them of being desperately in love with a girl that was in the fair, whom I did not know—that I had been in close pursuit of her for eight months—that it was in hopes of finding her that I came to the fair; and now that I had found her, I could in no way discover who she was. The gentlemen were highly amused, and every one gave me a different advice. Mr Bell bade me buy her a new gown for a fairing, and ask the direction to put on it. Mr Moffat bade me take time, and be cautious, and make some inquiries. "Ay, d——n thee, Jock!" said the other, "thou'lt take time, and be cautious, and make inquiries till thy head grow gray, an' thou'lt see the upshot." There was a Mr Thomas Laidlaw came in, who gave me the strangest advice of all, but which cannot be repeated. At length my friend Mr Murray said, "I tell thee, Geordie, lad, what I wad do mysale. I wad gae frankly up to the lass, and say, My bonny dow, I's fa'an in love wi' thee; an' feath, thou maun tell me wha thou is, an' I'll gie thee a kiss an' a braw new gown into the bargain." The rest hurra'd, and approved of John's plan; but I said it was impossible to do

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that as it might give the young lady offence. "Offence!" said he, "Domm thee, gouk, dost thou think that a woman wul be offendit at a chap for fa'ing in love wi' her? Nay, nay; an' that be a' the skeel thou has, I gie thee up for a bad job, Thou kens naething at a' about women, for that's the very thing of a' ithers that they like best. An' thou offend them wi' that, I little wat what thou'lt please them wi.' Now, gie me thy hand, like a brave lad, an' promise that thou'lt gae and de as I bid thee, an' thou'lt soon fin' out wha she is, thou's tied to de that."

All the rest applauded Mr Murray's plan with loud huzzas; so I gave him my hand, and promised that I would go and do as he had directed. Away I went, half inebriated as I was, to put the scheme in execution, while Mr Moffat cheered me out at the window. I soon found her out; for though Love be blind in some respects, he is very sharp-sighted in others.—She had just come out of a house with a party of borderers, utter strangers to me, and who were taking leave of each other. I went boldly into the midst of them, tapped the girl on the shoulder, and when she turned round, said familiarly, "Miss Jessy, I want to speak a word with you—I have a message for you—will you walk this way if you please?" She followed me without any hesitation into a little area. "You must not be astonished at what I am going to tell you," said I; "for, in the first place, it is simple, honest truth, which always deserves a hearing;—I am in love with you—most violently and passionately in love with you, and have been so for these eight months." I'll never forget the look that she gave me—it was eloquence itself; the eloquence of nature, and in a language that could not be mistaken. It was something between fear and pity, and I am certain she thought I was deranged. "I am not in jest, Jessy," said I again; "I never was more serious in my life: Ever since I saw you at D——f——e sacrament, I have

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been so overcome by your beauty, that I have neither had rest nor peace of mind, and I humbly beg that, for the future, we may be better acquainted." "Lad, I's rad thou's hardly theesel," said she, in the true border twang; "I never saw thei atween the eyne afore. I disna object nought at a' to thei acquaintance; but we canna be acquainted a' at ance." "If you are free to form an acquaintance with me, and willing to form it, that is all I desire, and all I request at present. Pray, have I your consent to pay you a visit?" "I'se muckil obleyged to thei, sur; I'se shure I should leyke very weil to sey thei, an' seye, I daur say, wod mee feyther:—but thou canna be nought but jwoking a' this teyme." "I protest to you again, that I never was more serious in my life, which I hope to prove; for I am sure such a lovely face must be the index to a pure exalted mind, and a kind benevolent heart. Will you be so kind as give me the direction to your father's house? I am unacquainted with the roads thereabouts, and shall have hard finding it." "Oo! juost ower the sweyer there, and up the waiter till thou come to the boonmost town; that's auld Tammy Aitchison's. Than mee feyther's is the neist town ower the hill frey thei; juost speare for Robie Armstrong's at the Lang-hill-side-gate-end." "O, yes!" said I; I know now perfectly well. What, is this the name of old Thomas Aitchison's farm?" "B—p—a, thou kens," said she; "Tammy an' I's weel acquaintit; he'll like fine to see thei coming up the Hope." "Well," said I, "I'll come and see you in a fortnight, or twenty days at farthest; but come, now, and let me buy your fairing." She accompanied me to a craim, and I bade her choose a fancy gown. She again took a long, silent, and thoughtful look of me, measuring me from head to foot; and there was something quite new to me in all this. She looked at me with as much freedom and innocence as a young colly-dog would look at its master. I could not think her vulgar; for a face so much

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indicative of health, love, and joy, I never looked upon; it was as fresh as a rose, and as delicate; but her frame was scarcely proportionate, being rather large, and, in some points, too voluptuous. She remained silent, until I again desired her to make a choice; and then she absolutely declined accepting of any thing beyond the value of a ribbon, or a small buckling-comb, as a keepsake. It was in vain that I solicited; so I bought her a roll of ribbon, with which I presented her; but observing that she cast her eyes casually on a web of sarsnet, I bought a frock of it, and handed the merchant a direction where to send it. I perceived by this time that there were several good-looking, sunburnt, well-dressed, young men eyeing us all this while with more than ordinary earnestness; and I likewise observed, that Miss Armstrong was watching some one with a good deal of triumph in her eye. She was sitting on the end of the merchant's crain. "Now, my angel, give me a kiss before we part, as an earnest of better acquaintance," said I. "Ay, that's right," said the pedlar. This seemed to be a request that she wished, or at least expected, should be made, for she instantly turned round her beauteous face, elevating it with the simplicity of a child, and gave me what I asked, without either hesitation or confusion, save a slight blush, that gave her neck a little of the hue of the moss-rose. At that moment a gentleman came hastily forward, and, taking her by the hand, he led her away, without taking any notice of me. She made me a courtesy, however, and smiled to me over her shoulder. "Ah, you have made some hearts sair this day!" said the peddling merchant. "Did you see how the chaps were looking?" "So you know Jessy, I see?" said I. "Know her!" said he. "Aye, and her father afore her. She's a sweet gipsy, it maun be confessed!" When I heard that, I looked my watch, and made off as fast as my feet would carry me. I had a mind to have asked a number of things at the pedlar, but when I

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heard that she was one of the gipsies that I had been courting and kissing in the open fair, I thought I had heard enough for one time.

Afraid to face my friend, John Murray, and his associates, I sauntered about the street—went and got my father's mare corned, and had some thoughts of riding straight home, without ever looking back to the border again. The merchant observed me passing among the crowd, and beckoned me to him. "Master," said he in a whisper, "tak' care o' yoursel. There was a wheen chaps here speerin after you, an' they're gaun to gie you a leatherin." "A leatherin, friend!" said I, "pray what may that mean?" "'Tis what we ca' threshin' ane's skin i' some places; or, a drubbing, as an Englishman wad ca't," returned he. "They can have no hostility against me?" said I. "Steelity here, steelity there, they're gaun to try't. They think nought o' that here-away. But they'll gie you fair play for your life. They canna bide that ye sude come an' snap away the bonny lass, an' the lass wi' the clink, frae amang them." I understood the meaning of this term well enough. I knew that this girl with whom I was madly in love was beautiful, but now that I heard she had money, I looked a little bolder, though how a gipsy should have a fortune I could not see. "Well, well!" said I, "let the blades come on, since that is the case; any one of them may perhaps meet with his man."

"Nay, they'll gie you fair play," said the pedlar. "But gin ye let yoursel' be lickit, nouther the lass nor her father will ever look at ye or hear ye speak; you'll find that I tell you as a friend; an' thae Liddilhead devils are nae canny to cowe haffats wi." I thanked him for his kindness; bade him take no concern about me; and, having got a hint that my captivator was rich, I thought that though she was come of the blood of the Egyptians, I would hie back to Mr Murray and his friends, and acquaint them with the success of my enter-

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prise. At the same time I could not help wondering at what I had heard. I perceived that there was something in Border life, manners, and feeling, quite abstract from any thing I had ever witnessed before.

I found my friend, John Murray of Baillie-hill, and his jovial companions, still over the bowl, and in a high state of elevation. Mr Moffat arose, shook me by both hands—asked of my success, and said, he hoped I had done nothing rashly. As the rest were in a warm debate about the *crocks of Nether Cassway* and *the eild ewes of Billholm*, I sat down beside him, and related all my adventure with the young lady; but I still thought, from the want of speculation in his eye, that he was not taking me very well up; when I had done, I found that he did not comprehend, or rather did not recollect an item of what I had told him; so I was beginning to relate it all over again to him, for I liked the frank, unaffected manners of the gentleman exceedingly; but Mr Murray stopped me; "Cuom, cuom," said he, "hae thee duone, lad; Jock's ower far gane to take up thy story the night; an' thou wad tell him till the muorn at day light, thou'lt never make him either the dafter or the wiser." "Heard ye ever the like o' that?" said Moffat, "to say that I canna take up a story? I can take up any story that ever was told in English. But I maun hear it first. I'll defy a man to take up a story before he hears it. Na, na—that's impossible—you canna do that mair than I." "Woy, dear man, thou haurd it aw alraidy," said Mr Bell, "and yet thou disna mind a single sentence o't. I'll bet thee a bowl o' punch that thou disna tell o'er ae sentence of what Mr Cochrane tauld thee juost now about his sweetheart." "Done," said the other, and the wager was taken; but when Moffat came to recite his sentence, he related distinctly enough the history I gave them before going out—his memory retained nothing later, and he vowed he had heard no more.

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Murray, who was likewise half-seas-over, gave me the history of my border sweetheart, a subject of great interest to me. Her father was an old shepherd, a man who had been singular in his youth, both for strength and agility; and though only five feet seven in stature, a very diminutive size on the Border, there was not one could cope with him, either at running, wrestling, or putting the stone. He added a very amusing anecdote of him, which was as follows.

His master, a Mr Jardine, betted twenty guineas with an English gentleman of the name of Whitaker, who declared that he never had been beat; that Armstrong would beat him at putting the stone; and they set a day on which Whitaker was to call at the shepherd's house, as by chance, along with two witnesses, and try the match. Jardine sent private word to his shepherd of what had taken place, and desired him to be at home on such a day; however, when the English gentleman called, he was not at home—there was none there but Meg Armstrong, his sister, who was busy up and down the house, baking bread, and churning the milk, &c. They asked very particularly about her brother, but Meg assured them he would not be home either that day or next, and begged if she might ask what they wanted with him? Whitaker said it was a matter of no consequence—a mere frolic—That he and his two friends had come off their way a little to see him, having heard so much of his uncommon strength, and that they intended to have tried him at putting the stone, and wrestling. "Ay, ay," said Meg, "Weel I wot, sir, neything wod hae pleysed him better, had he been at heame—he's aftner at theye theyngs nor his beuk. But I trow aye he's neye grit stocks at them eftir aw, for I hae seyne the deye whon I cwod hae bett him an Jwock beath, but they hae gwotten queyte aheid o' me for a year or tway bygane, an' I tak it nae that weile out."

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Whitaker's friends thought this was high game, and instantly proposed that Meg Armstrong and he should try it, as a specimen of what her brother could do.

"I'll let thee see how fer I can throw it meesail, wi' aw my hairt," said Meg; "an yeance I faund the weight o' thei stane, I'll tell thei till a tryfle whithur thou or Robie will ding."

They went out to an old green turf dike, where it was apparent that much of the business of putting had been going on, as there were choice stones of every dimension lying about, and the ground so beat up, that there was not a blade of grass upon it. Meg bade him choose his stone. He chose one about twenty pounds weight, and threw it carelessly, not thinking it necessary to exert himself to beat a woman. Meg then took up the stone, and, throwing it as carelessly, and with as much apparent ease, sent it full two yards beyond him. The Englishmen damned themselves if ever they saw the like of that! and it was not until he stripped off his coat and boots, and threw it six times, that he was able to break ground before Meg, which at last he did. Meg tucked up the sleeves of her short-gown; and, taking up the stone again, threw it with so much art, that it went a foot and a half beyond Whitaker's mark. The latter tried it again twice, but not being able to mend his last throw an inch, he gave in with good humour; but he was quite convinced in his own mind that Meg was a witch. Whitaker was nearly six feet and a half high, and Meg could almost have stood under his arm.

"Thou's naething of a putter," said Meg, "I see by the way thou raises the stane; an thou saw my billy Rwob putt, he wad send it till here. Now, an thou likes, I'll try thee a waratle te; for I comes nearer till him in that nor ony theyng else."

Whitaker would not risk his credit with Meg a second

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time, as he had no doubt of the issue; but, giving her a guinea, he shook hands with her, and went his way. Shortly after this he enclosed the amount of his wager, and sent it to Mr Jardine in a note, intimating, that he had missed his shepherd when he called; but was fully convinced, from some accounts he had heard of him, that he would have been beat.

The secret never was acknowledged, but every one acquainted with the family knew, that Meg Armstrong, Rob's sister, who was a sprightly handsome girl, fond of dancing and dress, never could wrestle a fall with an ordinary man in her life, or putt a stone; nor did she ever attempt either, save on that occasion. There was therefore no doubt, but that Rob had sent his sister out to the hills to tend the sheep that day, and had dressed himself in her clothes, in order that he might not be affronted if the Englishman beat him, and to humble his antagonist as much as he could.

Mr Murray having told me of this exploit of my intended father-in-law at this time, I thought proper to set it down here, as somewhat illustrative of a character which I had afterwards to do with. Of my Border flower he told me, that she was an only daughter by a second marriage; that a maternal uncle of hers, who had been an under-clerk in a counting-house in Liverpool, and, by a long life of parsimony, had amassed a considerable fortune, had left her his sole heiress, so that the girl had of late been raised to move in a sphere to which she had not been bred; and that her personal beauty, simplicity, with the reports of her great fortune, had brought all the youths on the Border to her as wooers. "An' I can juost tell thee, lad," added Mr Murray, "afore thou gets away Jainny, thou'lt hae ilka wight chap to fight atween the head o' Liddal an' the fit of Cannobie." "I have got some short hints of that already," said I; "but tell me, my dear friend, has she got none of the blood of the gipsies in her; for her bright black eyes and long eye-lashes bring me

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very much in mind of a young Egyptian?" He laughed at me, and said I was raving. "The de'il a drap of gipsy blood's in her veins!" said he. "Her mwother was ane o' the Pairks o' the Woofcleuchead, and her feyther's ane o' the true auld Border Armstranga." I then confessed to him, that I heard a merchant at a craim say she was a gipsy. "Oh!" said he, "that's been Pether Willie o' Hawick. A' the women are gipsies wi' him. He never ca's ane o' them by another name. He gies my daughters ney other titles, juost afwore my feace, than gipsy Jean and gipsy Nannie."

At that instant there was a tall raw-boned fellow, with a gray plaid tied round his waist, who opened the door and looked in, without accosting any of the company; but I perceived that he looked very eagerly at me, as if examining my features and proportions with wonderful curiosity. He closed the door quietly, and went away; but, in about ten minutes afterwards, he opened it again, and inspected the company in the same way as before. "What the devil do you want, sir?" cried Mr Moffat furiously, who was by this time nearly whole-seas over. "Ney aill to thei ata', mon; haud thei gollaring tongue," said the fellow, and closed the door. About two minutes after, another handsome, athletic, well-dressed borderer opened the door, and surveyed our party. "What the devil do you want, sir?" cried Mr Moffat. The man hastened out, and closed the door; but I overheard him saying to his associates, "That's juost the very mon; we hae him seafe and snwog." "By G——," said Murray, "these are the chaps alraidy watching to hae a bellandine wi' thee—an thou tak nae guod caire, lad, thou's in cwotty Wollie's hands. I ken the faces o' them weel—they canna leave a fair without some strow, an' they're makin thee their mark the neyght. Thou maunna steer frae this board; an' then, when it grows mworning, we'll a' munt an' ride away thegither." I confess, when I overheard what the fellow said on closing the door, and this

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suggestion of my friend's, I felt a thrilling apprehension, which made me very uneasy; however, I pretended to treat the subject lightly; and, like all other young puppies, my boastings and threatenings of the other party were proportionate to my fears of them; for I swore I would make an example of the first that presumed to intrude his snout into her company again. Mr Moffat applauded my resolution, and out-swore me, saying that he would do the same. He even went farther, for he swore he would fight them all, one after another.

"Thou'lt fight the devil!" said Mr Bell, who seemed to have a great friendship for Moffat, and an anxious wish to keep him from any unwarrantable sally; "thou'lt fight wi' the devil, Jwock! I tell thee, keep thy seat and be quiet. Thou'lt nae quorrel nor fight wi' a human creature till thou be that way thou canna stand thy leane, and then thou wad quorrel wi' the cat an she wod quorrel wi' thee."

Moffat, however, brooding on the insult we had suffered, in being intruded and stared on by blackguards, as he supposed them to be, proposed to me, by way of retaliation, that we should open their door thrice, inspecting them in the same manner, and see how they liked it; and the more his friends disapproved of it, the more intent he grew of putting his scheme in execution. I could not well refuse to accompany him, as it was I who began the bragging, though I did not inwardly approve of the measure, from its being so like seeking a mischief. However, away we went at last, in spite of all our friends could say to us, and opened the door of a large ball-room, stood in the door, and stared at the company, which consisted of about eight or nine countrymen, who were sitting in one of the corners over a bowl of smoking whisky-toddy. Just as we were going away triumphant, several of the company cheered Mr Moffat as an old welcome acquaintance,

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and called on him to drink their healths in a glass of toddy before he went. He made no hesitation in complying with this request, for he was in the humour to have done any thing, either good or evil; and, as his arm was linked in mine, we were instantly seated at the table among these wild borderers. "Here's te thei, Mr Moffat," said the tall athletic fellow that first opened our door. I could not help noting him particularly: He had large hands and prodigious wrists—fair lank hair of a bright yellow—a large mouth, and fresh rosy complexion. "I say, here's te thei, Moffat, mon," repeated he; "thank ye, sir, said Mr Moffat; but wha am I to thank? for, faith, I hae forgot." "I's Tommy Potts i' the Pease-Gill, dissae thou meynd me?" "O aye, I mind now," said Moffat, "was not it you wha ran at the wedding o' Dews-lees wantin' the breeks?" "Ay, the very seame, Mr Moffat, thei memory's better than thei judgment after a'." Moffat was going to be in a great rage at this compliment, but another diverted his attention by saying, in a kind ardent voice, "Mr Moffat, I's devilish glad to see thy feace, mon; here's te thei very guod health." "Thank ye, sir, thank ye," said Moffat, looking steadfastly across the table; "an' wha the devil are ye, for my memory's never unco clear in a fair-night?" "I's Davie's Will o' Stanger-side, mon. I yeance coft thei crocks an' thei paulies, an' tou guidit me like a gentleman, else I had been hard pingled wi' them—Here's to thei, sir." "Here's thei guod health, Mr Moffat," cried a third; "thou'lt hae fargot me too? I's Jock Hogg i' Mangerton." "Ay, Jock, is this you, man? Here's your health. Ye're the saftest chap ever I stude a market wi'." "And, Mr Moffat," continued Jock Hogg, "dis tou meynd Willie Elliot o' Weirhope-Dodd?" "Mind Willie Elliot!" said Moffat, "Ey, my faith, I'll no soon forget him! he's the greatest lear that ever I met wi' o' the race o' Adam." "Woy, this is him on my reyght hand," said Jock Hogg, like to burst with laughter. Moffat never

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regarded, but went round inquiring all their names; and when he had done, he immediately commenced again. He was so well liked and respected by every body, that no one took offence at what he said, though he certainly gave great occasion.

At length Tommy Potts set his broad blooming face across the table, and accosted me nearly in these terms:—

"Sae it seyms tou's coming to teake away Jaissy Armstrang frae amang us, wi' the peckfu' o' auld nails, an' aw thegither? Tou'lt be the lucky chap an' tou gets her. But I's rade, that auld Robie will think tou's hardly beane for her. I can tail thei, that he'll never gie her till a lad that canny carry her through the burn, an' owre the peat-knowe, aneath his oxter, an' she's nae wother-weight nouther. What says tou to that? I doubt tou'lt ne'er be beane for Jainny."

I did not like the homeliness of this address; but, as I had seen a good deal of the same kind of manners during the day, I thought I would parry as good-humouredly as possible; so I said, I did not know the distance which the old man had set for the lover to carry his daughter, but that I certainly would exert my utmost efforts to gain such a lovely girl.

"Ney, ney," said he again; "I's shoor tou's nae beane for Jainny. But, an tou haes a good genteel down-sitting for the lassie, auld Robie well maybe discount thei a tetherlength or tway. Pray, is nae tou a tailor to thy business?"

"A tailor, sir!" "Ay, to be shoor, a tailor." "A tailor, sir! what do you mean by that?" "I ax your pardon, sir; I was only speerin' if tou was a tailor. I thought by thei dress tou mightest be a Moffat tailor; an' what o' that? I's shoor I hae seen a tailor a better mon than thei."

"I would have you know, sir," "said I, "that I am not accustomed to such language as this; and, moreover, if I thought there was a better man in all your country than myself, I would blow out my brains."

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"Ney, ney; I ax your pardon, lad; what can a man de mair? I didnae mean to set thei on thei heich horse a' at yeans this geate; but we're noor unco nice o' what we say here, for we're aye content to stand by the consequences."

"And, pray, does the consequence never occur, that a vulgar, impertinent scoundrel, such as you, who takes upon him to insult any stranger that comes into the company, should get himself kicked out of doors?"

"Woy, an the chap be fit te de it, the twether mawn bide by the consequences; there's nae law here but jwost that the thickest skin stands laungest out; and that tou'lt fitid, or tou taikes Jaissy Armstrang owre Sowerby Hap."

"It is not me you have insulted, you have insulted the company, and your country too, by the manner you have spoken to me. I merely came in as Mr Moffat's friend, in good fellowship, and must insist on you leaving the room."

"Ney, ney, I'll nae leave the room neyther." "But you shall leave the room, sir," said Mr Moffat, who had only heard the last two sentences, the mention of his own name having drawn his attention from a violent dispute he had got into with another man, about some tups, that Moffat averred were half muggs, and which the other man as strenuously denied. Potts, finding that the sentiments of the party, or at least the *voice* of the company in general, were against him for the present, succumbed a little, but apparently in very bad humour.

"Gointlemen, I's very sorry," said he, "for having offended the chop. I dwodna ken but what he could taike a jwoke an' gie a jwoke, like our nain kind o' lads; but I ax his pardon. What can a man de mair? I ax his pardon."

"O, that's quite sufficient," said Mr Moffat and the rest of the party—so Potts and I at length shook hands across the table. Mr Moffat and his opponent again began to their dispute about

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the breed of Captain Maxwell's tups; the rest fell into committees of a similar nature, according to their various occupations and concerns. Tommy Potts sat for a considerable time silent, leaning his temple upon his hand, and his elbow on the table, while his short upper-lip, which was nearly a span in length from cheek to cheek, seemed curled up almost to his nose, and his white eye-brows sunk fairly in below the arch of the eye, and pointed downwards. He was visibly labouring under a savage displeasure. At length he addressed me again as follows:—

"But efter a', mon, I wasna jwoking thei about auld Robie an' his douchter. He was a very straung chop the sel o' him, and he has taukt about it a' his life, and about naithing else; an' it is the only quality that he cares a doit about in a man. If ever tou gaungs to court the lassie, as I hae deune mony a time, tou maun first thraw a' the wooers that are there at a worstle, or the de'il a word tou gets o' her. I hae been five times there mysel', an' the shame fa' me an ever I gunt a neyght's courting yet; for I was aye turned up, an' obliged to come me weys wi' me finger i' me mouth."

"I was so much amused by this picture, and the way in which it was described, that I laughed heartily at it, and again got into free conversation with Potts. He assured me that every word of it was truth; and added many anecdotes of scenes that he had witnessed there and heard of from others. "An' be the bye," added he, "an tou'lt worstle a fa' wi' I, tou sal kean what chaunce tou hess; for I hae found the backsprents o' the maist part of a' the wooers she hess."

I was rather glad of this proposal, for I wanted to give Potts his weight on the floor, and I felt confidently sure of throwing him; for I had the art of giving a trip with the left heel, which I never in my life saw fail with any one that did not know the trick. However, I took care never to wrestle with

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a man above once or twice; for when my plan was once discovered, it was easily avoided; and, as I trusted solely to it, I ran a chance of coming off with the worse. The hall-room, where we were, was remarkably large, so that we had plenty of room; and up we got, in perfect good-humour, apparently, to try a fair wrestle, to the infinite delight of the company. Potts was a tremendous fellow for bone. I was afraid I would not be able to bring in his back close enough to get a fair trip at his right foot. But this being a manœuvre that no wrestler ever suspects, in working himself round with his side toward me, he brought himself into the very position I wanted; for he meant to throw me over his right knee. Quite sure of him then, I watched my opportunity; and the next moment, while he was in the act of moving the right foot a little nearer me, I struck it with my heel across before his left one, which brought him down below me with such freedom on the boards (for there was no carpet), that it was some minutes before he could speak. Every one present uttered some exclamation of astonishment, as no one had anticipated the issue but myself. Potts rose, drank off two or three glasses of toddy, changed colour as often, and sat down again much the same man as he was before; surly, savage, and dissatisfied.

"I never saw thei as easily thrawn over in me life, Tommy," said one. "I trowed he wod hae studden the gentleman a better shake," said another. "He fanldit him like a clout," said Mr Moffat. "Weel, weel, gentlemen," said Potts, "the chop thrawed me, there's ney doubt on't; an' he thrawed me very fairly too, I's nae disputing't; but I'll bet a choppin wi' ony o' ye, that he'll be ney langer wi' the neist he tries than he was wi' mey, if the chop be willing the sel o' him."

I said I was willing to risk a fall with any man, in good fellowship; and never hesitated on such matters. There was no one thought proper to accept my challenge; and, in conse-

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quence of my victory over Potts, and this acknowledged superiority, together with the fumes of the whisky-toddy, which high-mettled liquor we had imbibed with considerable liberality, I dare say I assumed rather too much for a stranger, and put on airs that scarcely became me, and which I would not have practised among intimate associates. But thinking I was landed in the company of a set of braggadocios, I resolved to abate no item of my dignity. Potts discovered this; and, still smarting from his late defeat, as well as for having been snubbed by the company before on my account, he made another effort to humble me, taking an opportunity while all the rest were loudly engaged in different disputes, so that no notice might be taken of it. We still filled the seats that we first occupied, straight opposite to each other, on different sides of the narrow board; when, in a half-suppressed voice of the most malevolent accent, he addressed me as follows:

"Tou hess thrawn me, there's nae doubt on't; an' tou's deune it fair eneuch. But what is there in that? tou hess nae right ava to coom into a coontry, an' brag thysel to be the best man in it, as I heard thee de the night; for I can tell thee, that tou's devilishly fer out o' the reckoning, for tou's naething but a dud to mony o' the chops o' this coontry. Thou took't sae ill to be thought a tailor; but, mon, I knows a tailor in this coontry that wod stap thei neb in a part o' thei —that I's no gaun to neame."

Without answering him a word, I lifted the tumbler of toddy and threw it in his face, sending the glass after it with all my might. This last missile had probably finished the redoubted Tommy Potts for ever, had he not half warded it with his arm, which he dashed to his eyes as they smarted with the warm liquor. It however cut the bridge of his nose, which spouted blood. There was no room for interference now, and none attempted it. Potts loosed his neckcloth, and stripped off his clothes, saying all the while, "Ey, mon, but

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thou's rather a sharp ane; but mevnd thei, that's a baptism that we border chops never teakes for neything. Tou mann fallow up the smack wi' something better nor that, or tou had'st better hae keepit it nearer theisel."

I did not strip, being lightly clad, but met my antagonist in the middle of the floor as he advanced, and saluted him with a hearty blow on the left temple, which he returned, and we then instantly closed. I threw him, and gave him his own weight, and my own right freely, but instantly jumped up and let him rise again to his feet, which I needed not to have done, for the border laws of war, as I was afterwards told, required no such thing, for 'The thickest skin stand langest out;' and they have no other. I was too late in being aware of this, else I might have saved myself from a great deal of trouble. He was a great deal stronger than I was—clumsy and raw-boned—with longer arms, and a heavier hand, but he was not so agile. Three times, in the heat of our scuffle, we closed, and every time I fell above him. One of these falls cut his wind considerably, for I had fairly the advantage for some time in striking, and mauled and disfigured his face most dreadfully; but he now took care, with his long arms, that we should not come to close gripes. I judged this to be all his aim, and therefore fought fearlessly, though with little science. He was master of a much more deadly art than throwing his antagonist in a struggle, and for that he had till now been watching. It was an open trip with the left foot, followed up by a blow with the right hand on the chest or face; and this he now practised on me so successfully, that I staggered to the further end of the room, and fell with my back against the wall. I felt a little stunned and giddy, but advanced with great rapidity again to the charge. I had now the worst of it; in four seconds he repeated his trip, accompanied with a tremendous blow on the brow, which made me fall freely back, and my head or shoulders

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striking on one of the forms, I lay in a state of utter insensibility.

It was long before I came to my senses, and then I found myself lying in a bed, with a surgeon and the mistress of the inn standing over me. Mr M——, the surgeon, had bled me copiously in both arms, and for a long time was in a state that I cannot describe; but felt excessively happy, and always inclined to laugh, yet so weak as not to be able to sit up in the bed. The surgeon left me, and ordered quietness; but what quietness can be had in the inn of a country town on the morning after a fair. About day-light, several of my evening associates came staggering and drowsy into the room, to inquire how I was before they went away, and among the rest, to my utter astonishment, in came Tommy Potts, with his face all patched and blotted, and the blood crusted in dark stripes from his brow to his toes. He came freely forward, and sat down on my bed-side, as if he had been a brother or a most intimate friend, looked anxious like to my face, and addressed me as follows, without ever giving me time to speak a word—fearing, I suppose, that my answers would be ill-natured:

"How is tou now, lad? Guod I's unco glad to see that tou's come about again, for I was rad that tou had left us awte-geather. I hae nae gatten sickin a gluff sen I was christened, (the first time I mean) an', be me certy, I was reather weshing it had been the sel o' me. Gie me thee hand, mon. I houp thou's nae the wour, an' we'll ay ken ane anwother again. Tou's as gaod a chop to thee inches as ever I foregathered wi'. But tou maun never gang to brag a hale country-side again. An' yet after aw, G——, tou fught devilish weel. An' I'll tell Jaissy that tou did. But tou best crackit thy credit there. But I'll tell her the truth; for, G——, tou did fight *devilish* weel."

And with that Tommy Potts left me, in excellent humour

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with himself, with me, and with all the world; a state to which victory often influences our minds, while misfortune sours them in a proportionate degree. Mine was so. I was very unhappy, and greatly ashamed of the business; for there were so many who saw it, that it spread like wildfire, and made a great noise among the country gossips. It was some days before I could ride home, and after I got home, it was a good while before I could be seen.

This I did not much regard; for my mind was too much occupied with other matters to feel any regret for the want of the society of my country neighbours. These twenty days form the great era of my *love adventures*, and it was the only period in which I could be said to be *over head and ears in love.* I then cared for nothing else, thought of nothing else, and dreamed of nothing else, save that rural Border flower. It was like witchcraft—a spell by which I was bound I wist not how. I lost my appetite, and all delight in my loved field-sports, and became a moping languid fool, as bad as a green-sick girl. I laugh to this day, when I reflect on the state to which I was reduced. I often caught myself, while repeating her name without intermission, an occupation which I perhaps had been following out with great assiduity for an hour or two—"Jessy Armstrong! Jessy Armstrong! dear, dear, sweet, lovely Jessy Armstrong!"

This is no exaggerated account; for, on the contrary, I felt ten times more than I can possibly describe. To such a loving disposition did this overpowering passion influence me, that I fell in love with other two, besides my adorable borderer. The one was a homely squat servant girl, in the neighbourhood, who chanced to have a cast in her eye that somewhat resembled Miss Armstrong's, or that I fancied resembled it, which amounted to the same thing, and I walked every day to get a blink of this divine creature's eye! The other was an old wife of the same hamlet, who spoke the border dialect in

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all its primitive broadness and vulgarity, which I thought the sweetest dialect on earth, and that there was a doric softness in the tones that melted the very heart: so I went every day to hear this delightful old wife speak! It must certainly be owing to some feelings that I then imbibed, that, to this day, I like better to hear that language spoken, than any other dialect in Britain.

I had said to this idol of my heart, that I would see her in three weeks at farthest. The time was nearly expired, and away I set on foot, a distance of fifty miles at least, to pay my addresses to her, not only burning and raving with love, but resolved to offer myself as a lover and husband, on any terms she chose. "Give me but the simple, the beautiful, blooming Jessy Armstrong," cried I, "and I ask no more in life!"

The way was long and mountainous, but I took a good part of two days to walk it, being resolved to arrive there in the evening. I liked always night-courting best myself, having been as it were bred to it; and I never had any doubt, whatever some of the women might pretend, but that they too gave it the preference. At all events, I knew that in the sphere in which Miss Armstrong had been bred, in the shepherd's cot, namely, any other time would have been viewed as a practical joke. I asked always the road for B—p—a, the name of Mr Aitchison's farm; but, when I came there about the fall of the evening, I liked very ill to ask the road to Lang-hill-side-gate-end—I could not do it; so I was obliged to guess, and take the hills at random. It grew late—I lost all traces of a road—and was in no doubt but that I had gone astray, and would never reach the Lang-hill-side-gate-end by that route. At length I came to a shepherd's cottage, into which I determined to go and ask the way, whatever shame it might cost me. I never thought any shame to go and court a bonny lass, but I could not endure that people should think I was come so far to catch a girl's fortune. However, in I went

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to ask the road, and found a group such as is often found in a shepherd's house, sitting round a hearth fire. It consisted of an old man, sitting on a bench made of dried ryegrass divots—his wife, a middle-aged woman, was sitting right opposite to him on the other side, carding fine wool on a pair of singularly long wool-cards—a young man, dressed in his Sunday clothes, with his plaid hung gracefully over the left shoulder, bespeaking him a stranger, sat on a chair before the fire; and a girl leaned with one knee on the hearth beside him, busily employed in lighting birns on the fire, and preparing the family's supper. I addressed them in the usual way, bidding them good-e'en; which was repeated by them in rather a careless indifferent way, very unlike the kind bustle of hospitality that always welcomes a stranger in the house of a Scottish shepherd. I added the common and acute remark, that it was a fine evening. "Aye, I's shure the e'ening's weel eneuch," said the old shepherd. "Are ye gaun a lang gate this wey the neight?" "Upon my word," said I, "that is more than I well know. What may the name of this place be?" "I dosna ken what it may be some time or wother," said he; "but I kens weel eneuch what it's ca't juost now." "And pray, what is it called just now?" said I. "It's ca't be a neame that thou canst nae saye: sey thou wadna be ney the better an thou haurd it," said the carl, in a tone, however, in which there was no ill-nature, but rather a kind of homely waggery.

By this time, the girl had stirred up the blaze to a bright flame; and, throwing her ringlets back over her left shoulder, turned round her head and looked full at me. Good heavens! who was it, but my dear Jessy Armstrong? I was not only surprised, but perfectly confounded; for, of all things in the world, I least expected to find a lady with a fortune of a thousand pounds, or, as some said, of five thousand, in a lonely shepherd's cot; and I could not help feeling as if I had got into a scrape. It was so unlike the places to

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which I had formerly gone a wooing. "Bless me, Miss Armstrong," I exclaimed, "is this you? I just stepped in to inquire the road to your place of residence, not thinking I would have the happiness to get to it so soon." During this short speech, she blushed, turned pale, and blushed again, but made no reply. I had seized her hand, which she still suffered me to hold. "I am so happy to see you again!" continued I; "How do you do? I hope I find you well?"

"Trouth ey, I's weel eneuch. How's tou theesel?" replied she, still looking particularly embarrassed. But after I had replied to this, she plucked up a little confidence, and said, "Sey thou hess found thee way into this coontry? I trowed ay thou wast jucking me; but they say better leate threyve than ne'er de weel. Come thee ways this waye, an' thraw fraebout thee plaid; thou's welcome to the Lang-hill-side-gate-end for aince." So saying, she led me round the hallan—took my plaid from me, and hung it up, at the same time whispering into my ear, "For thee life o' thee, denna tell them who thou is; but ca' theesel some wother neame; an' be sure to man theesel." I could in nowise comprehend the meaning of either of these injunctions; but had not a moment's time to ask the explanation of them, for we were now beside the company, and in a moment she had set a seat for me, which she requested me to occupy. I durst not speak a word, as I had some new character to support, of which I had never thought; and I blamed in my heart the caprices of women, who are always inclined to throw a mystery over every thing, and keep all concerned with them in the dark as far as possible. So there I sat, scratching with my nails at some spots of mud that had jerked on my pantaloons, while the old man surveyed my limbs and muscular frame with considerable attention. The wife looked at me, as if she would have looked me through; and the young shep-

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herd, biting his lip, cast a malicious and prying glance at me occasionally. We were all embarrassed, and no one knew either what to do or say, except the old wife, who again fell to her carding; the young shepherd made figures with the end of his staff among the ashes on the hearth, and Jessy walked about the floor with a most elegant thousand-pound air. The old man was the first to break silence. "Hess thou comed fer the day, lad?" said he. I answered, that I had only come from Sorbie. "Ey, ey," said he, "dis thou ken Sandy o' Sorbie? He's a gayan' neyce chap, Sandy; I yince herdit to the feyther o'm." "Feyther," said the malicious and incomprehensible beauty, "thou'lt no ken this lad? He an' I's fa'n acqueant at the public pleaces. This is Sandy Welch o' the Braeside." "Deed I kens noucht about him, Jainny. I hae seen some o' thae Welches at Staigshawbank mony a time, an' I's rad there's no that muckle in them; for I never saw ane o' them owther brik a chop's head, or take him be the neck, aw me days." I said, that though none of the Welches of *my family* would probably be the first aggressors in a brawl, yet there were some of them whose heads the best men in the kingdom durst not break. "Ey, trouth, that may be, lad. I should lyke to see them. Hess tou brought ony o' thae wi' thee?" "No," said I, "I have come by myself. I am one, I believe, of the weakliest of the name, but I do not think I have seen a man, since I came from home, that durst break my head." "Ey, ey!" said he, "dost thou say sae? Come, gie me thee hand; thou's a chop o' some mettle eftir aw. An' is tou come to court our Jainny?" "That is rather a home question, friend," said I. "Ney, ney, it's a very fair question," said he. "I's no saying tou's no to court her; thy reyght's as gwod as anwother's; I's only asking if thou is come to court." I was obliged to acknowledge that I did come with the intention of paying my addresses to his daughter.

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"Then, Wullie, lad," said he, with a joyful countenance, and looking to the young shepherd, "thou maun stand to thy taickle again." The shepherd looked offended, and said, "It is very unfair: now when I have turned up five already, and got so many strait grips, can you think there's any justice in bringing a fresh man in on me? I have set off five *already;* let him wait his day."

I could not comprehend this, and did not yet believe that what Tommy Potts told me, about the lovers wrestling for the maid's company, had any foundation in truth. The old shepherd, however, soon explained the matter.

"I dusna ken, Wullie Glendinning," said he; "thou may think it's hard for thee; but yince a chop has made a reule, I see ney oose in brikkin through't. Thou canna beath hae the lass's company at the seame time, an' I wod reather see her wi' the better chop than wi' the wauffest o' the tway. I'll tell thee what it is, Sandy Welch: sen ever my Jainny got a claut o' gear, the lads are like to pu' other's thrapples out about her; an' when twey or threy o' them come in ae night, as they will ay aw be rinning on a Friday night, an' aw the saum gate, we juost gar them try a werstle; an' whaever coups the lave, we let him try his hand at the courtin' for a wey, an' the rest maun juost strodd their ways. The lassie has walth o' gear to maintain baeth the sel o' her an' ony chop she likes to marry; and whin that's the case, I wod reather that she got a man than a bauchle."

"It is a singular way of casting lots for a proper husband, indeed," said I, "and worthy of a Border sheil. But, pray, does Miss Armstrong herself perfectly acquiesce in this plan?"

"Bless the heart o' thee!" said he, "she's the strickest o' the hale twote. She'll no bate a fallow an inch, if he war the son of a luord. Very little wod hae meade my Jainny a man, for she wants neane o' the spirit o' ane."

"I know nothing of the art of wrestling," said I, "but for

the sake of your daughter's company, I'll stand the test at that or any thing else."

"Deil a bit, but thou's a lad o' some spunk," said he; "an' thou's better beane than Wullie Glendinning, but he pretends to be a master o' the art. Coom, coom, Jainny, lassie, tak thou the bouet an' gie me a candle, I'll haud it i' the bung o' me bonnet, an' we'll see some mair fine sport."

Miss Jessy was not slack: she lighted a candle and put it into a lantern, which she called a bouet, and gave another candle to her father, who kept it burning by holding it knowingly in the lee side of his bonnet; and out we went to a beautiful green level, and stripped off our coats and shoes, to wrestle for a night's courting of this beautiful rural heiress. I pretended great ignorance, and made as though I did not even know how to take my hold. Miss Jessy directed us, determined to see fair play; and as soon as we were rightly placed for action, I fell a-struggling with as much awkwardness as I could assume, until both my antagonist and the old man laughed outright at me, for ever attempting to wrestle. After affording his sweetheart and her parents a little sport, William, to bring the matter to a genteel close, began to work himself round with his right leg toward me, as all good wrestlers do; but, seeing that I made no opposition to this principal manœuvre, he did it in a very careless way, thinking he had to do with a mere novice. Little did he know that this was just what I wanted. He was bringing himself to a position in which it was impossible he could escape me, provided I got the first trip of him, which I took care to take, whipping his right foot in a moment as high as my own knee. This brought him on his back with his full weight, and me above him. The old man uttered three or four exclamations of utter astonishment. "Thou hess gotten thy backbraid for yince, Willie," said Miss Armstrong. "What ailed thee, Willie?" said the wife. "Thou may weel speer, woman," said Robie again; "for, be the saul o' me, I never saw Willie

Glendinning sae easily laid on his back aw me lyfe. Ha, ha, Willie, thou jwost fell over as thou had been a corn-seck, or a post set up without ony feet."

"Confound his ignorance!" said Willie; "whae ever thought of his taking the left foot? It was the cleverest trick I ever saw; but if we twa yoke again!" "The present time is only ours," said I; "if that should chance, you will not find me backward."

Glendinning seemed loth to give up the right he had so dearly and so nearly won, and tried again and again to get a private word of Jessy, but did not obtain it. He came in, sat down with us, and joined in the general conversation for about an hour; and all the time eyed the lovely heiress so constantly, that I was persuaded he was as deeply in love as I was. Indeed, I never saw her look so comely, or half so elegant, as in her every-day dress. She was in the dress that the country maidens in the Lowlands of Scotland wear; by far the most becoming dress in the world for setting out the female form in all its lightsome ease and elegance, a circumstance well known to our ingenious countryman, David Wilkie. I cannot describe how much more graceful she looked, in her muslin short-gown and dimity petticoat, than in her best dress at the fair, and the solemnity at which I first saw her. I see the dress must always bear a proportion to the polish of the mind; and one woman looks most lovely in a dress in which another would look exceedingly awkward.

Among other topics of conversation, they chanced to fall on one that was not a little irksome to me, and partly explained Jessy's stratagem. "Does tou ken a chap," said Robie, "out amang thy muirs, some gate, that they ca' Geordie Cochrane?" I said I had seen him, but was not intimately acquainted with him. "He gat his skin tightly threshed at the hiring fair, however," said he, "be ane o' our Liddel-head chaps 'at they ca' Tommy Potts. He

thought proper to kiss our Jainny, an' gie her her fairing; but he had better hae keepit his kisses and fairings to the sel' o' him, or ta'en them hame to his muirland lasses and benty-neckit foresters, for be my certy he gat his dickens." Here the old bully of a Borderer scratched his elbow and his ear, and indulged in a hearty laugh, at the circumstance of Potts having *threshed my skin*, as he called it. Glendinning and the wife joined him, and Miss Armstrong laughed the heartiest of all, seeming to enjoy my predicament mightily.

"Had the fool taen the lassie into a house, out o' sight," continued old Robie, chuckling, "he might hae gien her half a score o' kisses, an' then nae man had ony right to pike a hole in his blanket; but for a stranger to kiss a lass i' the open street, afore a' her sweethearts an' acquaintances, it's bragging them a' to their teeth." "We never look on it in any other light," said Glendinning. "He needs nae come hame," said Robie, "an' that ye may tell him, Sandy Welch, frae me; for the man that first gies a hale coontry-side the brag, an' then lets sic a chap as Tommy Potts skelp him till he can nouther gang nor stand, sall never cross haffats wi' a bairn o' mine."

I could not help taking up the cudgels in my own defence: so I said, that I understood my countryman had been provoked beyond sufferance by vulgar and insulting language; and, moreover, that I had been told there was very little difference in the engagement, by an eye-witness; and that if Cochrane had not been so generous as always to let him up, when he had him under him and at his mercy, the success of the day had been reversed. "I's unco glad, however, that he gat his hide beasted," said Robie. "I likes ay to see a man that brags me coontry come to the woar; and ony chap that wad fling a glass, punch and aw, in a neighbour's face, deserves aw that Cochrane gat. Be the faith o' me, I never gat sae hard a word frae neay man, but I could hae gien aa

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hard a ane again, rather as be sae belt bursten; he mought bae dung out the chield's herns, an' what wad he hae said for the sel' o' him then? It was a dear kiss to him, Jainny; an' yet thou laughs at it, thou hempy. What's aw this snirtin an' gigglin the night for? I wat weel this is no Geordie Cochrane the sel' o' him?" "I would not wonder much if it is," said Glendinning. "And now I think on't, I could gay my oath it is no other; the ease with which he threw Tommy Potts, and the trip with the left heel." "Me, sir!" said I, observing how necessary it was to keep up my lovely maid's stratagem—"Me! me Geordie Cochrane!" Glendinning was rather damped, and Jessy was like to die with laughing; but as soon as she recovered breath, she said, "Never heed thou what he says, Willie; he's juost Geordie Cochrane—stand to thy point." "The devil's in the wench," thought I, "what is she about now? Is she first going to lay a scheme, and then blow it up in my face for mere diversion?" I was wrong, and she was right. I believe she took the only method, on the emergency, that could have turned them from the right scent. Glendinning looked suspicious; but old Robie, her father, was quite convinced. "Ah! thou pawky elf," said he, "thou's tricking us, and want to set us about the lugs o' ane anowther, to gie thee sport. I'll tell thee what it is, Sandy Welch, thou hess won thysel' a gliff's cracking wi' that skelpie; but an thou believe aw that she tells thee, thou'lt get few to believe thee."

With that old Robie began to loose his knee-buttons and thrus down his hose, which Glendinning took as a signal, and trudged his way in bad humour, and apparently suspecting that he left the bonny lass, for whom he had wrestled so manfully, in the possession of the detested Geordie Cochrane. Old Robie conversed with me freely as Sandy Welch, and said, that "he had heard thae Welches about the head o' Annan war muckle men i' the warld, and strang i' gear; but,

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for his part, he likit strength o' beane and sennin better, for that Jainny stwood in nay need o' the ane, but the twother might stand her i' some stead, and might beet a mister meay ways than ane. But wow, man," continued he, "they hae durty ill-faur'd sheep! I hae seen them stannin i' Staigshaw-bank, wi' great smashis o' ill-bred tatty things, as black wi' tar as they had been dippit like candle i' the tar-kitt; but they had some pith i' their spaulds te." The idea of bodily strength was always uppermost with Robie; and I conceived, from the thoughtful mood in which he appeared after he had made the last remark, that his mind was dwelling on the idea of the success that the Messrs Welch's black-faced tarry wedders would have had, in wrestling or running, against the Cheviot and mugg wedders of the south. At length he left us abruptly, and went to bed, with this observation, that "if I proved as expert at courting as wrestling, he stood a chance of losing his bit wench."

Not so indifferent was the mother of the young lady. She appeared dissatisfied, and unwilling to leave her only daughter in the dark with a stranger. She kept poking about the fire with the tongs, and, at every word which was said, either by her daughter or me, she uttered a kind of *hem*, without opening her lips. It sounded to me like a note of pity mixed with derision, and I did not like the wife at all. She did not, however, venture to expostulate for a good while, seeming afraid of being overheard by her husband; for she was constantly looking over her shoulder towards the bed, in which he had vanished among good woollen blankets, to dream over the feats of his youth in running, wrestling, and putting the stone. Robie's breath began to sound deep—the goodwife's hems became more audible, and by degrees sounded rather like free groans. I wished her a hundred miles distant, and feared that she would mar all my bliss with that lovely and delightful creature, for whom my whole vitals had been so

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long inflamed with love. "Gae thee ways to thee bed, mother," said Jessy, who had till now been working up and down the house. "What's tou sitting graning there for? Mind I hae been up twae nights this week already."

"Twae nights already!" exclaimed Mrs Armstrong, alias Mary Park o' the Wolfcleuch-head, who, having come from the head of Borthwick Water, did not speak with such a full Border accent as either her husband or daughter; "Twae nights already! H'm! h'm! bairn, bairn! I hae often tauld thee, that sic watchins an' wakins, an' moopins an' mellins wi' ilka ane, can never come to good. But d'ye ken, sir, that our Robin's crazed, poor man, about warstling, an' a' sic nonsense. Gude sauf us! I believe he has never thought about aught else a' his days; just as ane could warstle himsel' into heaven. O wad he but mind the ae thing needful! an', instead o' gieing our bairn to the best warstler, gie her at night to him that could pray the best prayer for himsel' an' her."

"An', be me troth, mwother, I wadna sit five minutes in his company," said Jessy. "Does tou ken what Jamie the poyet's sang says? 'He that prays is ne'er to trust.' I wad reyther trust mysel' wi' a good warstler than wi' a good prayer, ony time. I'm quite o' the poyet's mind."

"H'm! h'm!" said Mary Park, "sic tree, sic fruit! The thing that's bred i' the bane's ill to drive out o' the flesh. Oh, wow me! what this age is come to! I'll tell thee, Mr Welch, the highest part o' my ambition wad be, to see my lassie married on a minister; ane that wad mind the thing that's good, an' keep by his ain wife an' his ain bed, an' that had a snug house, an' a glibe that he could ca' his ain, an' a round sum ilka year, whatever might happen."

"I tell thee sae, now," said Jessy: "I trow there's mony *ae thing needful* wi' thee, mwother. But I ne'er saw it otherwise wi' a religious body yet. A' self! a' self! The very dread o' hell, an' their glibness o' claughtin at heaven, has

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something selfish in it. But I'm sure I twold thee, mwother, that I had nae objections to a praying man. Canst tou pray weel, Sandy? I's sure can tou, for I saw thee turnin' up the white o' thy een at Tommy Rewit's sermon. I'se be bound, aften hast tou had thy neb to a lime wa'."

"Haud your tongue, ye corky-headit, light-heeled tawpie," said the displeased Mary Park o' the Wolfcleuch-head; "wad ye rin your head against Heaven, an' your back to the barn wa', at the same time? Sorry wad I be to see it; but I'm sair cheatit gin some o' your warstlers dinna warstle you out o' ony bit virtue an' maidenly mense that ye hae, an' fling a' your bonny gowd guineas to the wind, after they hae ye under their thoom. As the tree fa's, there it maun lie; and as the maid fa's, sae she maun lie too."

"I ken weel what gate I shall fa', then," said the implacable Miss Armstrong, who evidently wished, by every means in her power, to put a stop to her mother's religious cant, of which, I suppose, she got many a hearty dose; but it would not do.

"H'm! h'm!" said Mary Park, "alak, an' wae's me! But what can I expect? If the good seed be sown among thristles, it will spring among thristles; if it's sown in the flesh, it maun grow in the flesh; if it's sown among stones, it will rise among stones."

"Hout, fie, mwother," interrupted the maid, "thou's no surely hinting that I was sawn in ony o' thae soils? Gin that be Scripture, it's unco hamel made, an' we hae enough o't."

"The want o' religion is the mother of a' evil," said Mary Park. "It is the edder on the hill, that sooks the laveracks out o' the lift. It is the raven i' the wilderness, that cries from evening to morning, an' the mair that ye feed her, the louder is her cry. But wo be unto her that thirsteth after stolen bread and the waters of unrighteousness! I send ye to

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the kirk, an' when I expect ye to come hame like a good heavenly-mindit lass, wi' a' the notes o' the sermon, ye come hame wi' half a dozen profane young hempies at your elbow. I send ye to a' the sacraments round, in hopes that ye'll get a draught o' faith; but a' that ye get is another draught o' sense, an' hame ye come wi' another young man after ye. Your ee's like the edder's, it draws a' the carnal an' worldly-mindit o' this generation to you; an' sair am I fear'd, that a cast o' grace thou'lt never get."

"Indeed, but I will, mwother: an thou'lt gae to thee bed, Sandy Welch will gi'e me ane. He ga'e me ane already, when he threw Willie Glendinning; for ill wad I hae likit to hae sat another night wi' him. But it was nae cast o' grace for poor Willie. But come, come, Sandy, as I'm sure thou didna come fifty miles to hear a sermon, I trow thou an' I maun e'en make our bed 'low down amang the heather' for a' night."

"Waur an' waur," said Mary Park; "wha can take fire i' their bosom an' no be burnt? I hae tried feathers, I hae tried woo'; I hae tried a bed o' won hay, an' ane o' fleeing bent; but I fand ay the temptations o' Satan harder on a bed o' green heather than a' the lave put thegither. Na, na, an ye will trust yoursel wi' strangers, keep within your father's door; there's something sacred i' the bigging, and in the very name. I's e'en gae my ways and leave ye; my absence will be good company; but, oh! I wish it war *his* will that the days o' warstling an' wooing were ower!" And on saying this, Mary Park, formerly of the Wolfcleuch-head, went groaning to her bed and left us.

I could not help being affected with her words, notwithstanding all the absurdities that she jumbled together. The scriptural style in which her reflections were vented gave them sometimes a tint of sublimity. I saw that she had fears for her daughter, but wist not well what to fear; and, moreover, that

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all her ideas were crude and unformed. As for Janet, she was completely her father's child, as the saying is; and actually valued a man principally on his prowess in athletic exercises No sooner were we left alone, than she lifted my arm, and desired me to hold it up. I obeyed; when, to my astonishment, she clasped her arms round my shoulders and chest, and squeezed me so strait, that I was like to lose my breath. "This," thought I, "is the most amorous girl that ever I met with in my life;" and, judging it incumbent on me to return her caresses, I likewise clasped my arms round her, and was going to lay on two or three sound smacks of kisses on her lips; but she repulsed me sharply, saying, at the same time, "Thou didst nae think, fool, that I was gaun to kiss thee; I was only fathoming thy girth round the shoulders. There's no a lover that I hae, but I ken his poust to a hair. Thinks tou I'll sit wi' a lad till aince I ken whether he's worth the sitting wi' or no?"

She next spanned my wrist, and then, with particular attention, my arm, near the shoulder. "Thou's no the beane o' our Border lads," said she, "but there's few o' them better put thegither. I hae nae fund a better shaped, cleaner made arm." And then she added, with a full sigh, "I wish thou had but lick'd Tommy Potts."

I pretended to hold the matter very light, and said, it was a drunken fray, in which no man could answer for the consequences; but I found that nothing would go down—no pretence or excuse was admissible; I must either *lick Tommy Potts*, or give up all pretensions to her. She even let me know, in plain enough terms, that I was a favourite, and that she regretted the circumstance exceedingly; but that indelible blot on my character rendered it impossible for her either to think of me as a lover or a husband. "What wad my father an' half-brothers say," said she, "if I were to marry a man

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that loot himsel' be threshed by Tommy Potts, a great supple dugon, wi' a back nae stiffer than a willy-wand? It's nae great matter to settle him. He's gayan' good at arme-length, an' a fleeing trip; but when ane comes to close quarters wi' him, he's but a dugon." I offered to challenge him to fight me with pistols, but that only raised her indignation. She abhorred such mean and cowardly advantages, she said, which was confessing my inferiority in both strength and courage at once, the only two ingredients in a man's character that were of any value. In short, nothing would do, and I was obliged to leave my rural beauty, for whom my heart had been in such pain, without any encouragement. I was, however, greatly amazed with her character; and her personal beauty was such, that I could not help loving her. Her manners were rustic, but not vulgar; and her character, though a perfect anomaly among her sex, was void of affectation. Besides, her fortune was free and unincumbered,—no small concern for the son of a poor farmer.

Upon the whole, I thought I could not do less than once more fight Tommy Potts, and either retrieve my lost honour or die in the skirmish; and with this manful intent I went to the July fair at Langholm. I soon got my eye upon my antagonist; but who should he be going in close company with, but the identical Willie Glendinning? This was rather an awkward predicament, as I behoved to appear as Sandy Welch to the one, and Geordie Cochrane to the other; so I was obliged to watch them at a distance, and from the way that I saw them looking about, and keeping constantly together, I had no doubt but that they were on some plot against me, either in one of my characters or both.

The day wore to a close, and I saw that they were determined not to separate. I had kept myself sober all the day, that I might have my senses and dexterity in full play; and

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I was glad to see that Potts seemed to be tippling with great freedom. Resolved not to let the opportunity slip, I got my friend Jock Grieve of Crofthead, a gentleman who feared no man alive, and cared as little either for giving a good threshing, or getting one, as any man I knew of. I took him in, merely on pretence of treating him with a glass before leaving the market, and without apprising him, in the most distant manner, of my intentions of *beginning a rowe*, as it is there called. I knew my mark well; and, in considerable perturbation of mind, led the way into a tent, where sat my two Border antagonists. I chose, as my seat, the form immediately facing theirs, so that when we sat down our noses were almost together. Potts uttered an exclamation of surprise, and instantly held out his hand; but, being determined to stand on no terms with either the one or the other, I refused to shake hands with him. This affronted him greatly; his face grew as red as crimson, and he fell a fretting and growling most furiously." "Sae thou winna sheake hands wo me, wilt tou nae? Gwod, I rues that I offered. I think I cares as little for thee as thou does for me, an' I think I hess pruven that I needs care as little." I asked what business he, or any low vulgar rascal like him, had ado to interfere with me; and if it was the custom of this country, that two or three friends could not go into a house, or tent, to talk of business, or enjoy themselves, but they must be interrupted by such beastly jargon as his? "I chastised you for your temerity in that already," added I, "and think you should have taken some care before you ventured to do it again."

It is impossible to describe his impatience at hearing this. He fidged and grinned, squeezing his teeth together, and doubling his great fists; and, at length, with more readiness than any one would have thought he was master of, he answered, "Weal, weal, I's no speak to thee at a'. But tou canna hinder me to speak to my ain neighbour, and tou *canna* hinder

me to speak about what I like. Wullie Glendinning, did'st tou ever hear the like o't, for Geordie Cochrane to say he chasteased me? It is weal known to a' the country that I throoshed him till he coudna stand the lane o' him." "And sae thou's Geordie Cochrane after a'?" said Glendinning. Jack Grieve, on seeing that ill blood was getting up, thought it was requisite for him, as my friend, to be angry too. "I beg your pardon, sir," said he; "you're in a small mistake; he is commonly calt *Master* Cochrane; and do you call him aught else, at your peril, in my company." "And thou's Master Grieve, too, I's uphaud; and I's Mr Glendinning; and by Gwod, an' thou ca's me aught else the night, I's won thee a good dadd on the tae side o' thee head."

It was needless to blow the coal any hotter between these two; there was defiance in every look that past, and in every word that was uttered between them; so that I was left with Potts to renew our quarrel as we chose. I took care it should not be long, being resolved before hand to try his mettle once more. I told him, that the manner in which he had talked of me in the country, I was determined not to bear—that he knew I had it in my power to have finished him two or three times in our first encounter, had I chose—that he should now know his master; and if he had the heart of a flea, he could not refuse to give me satisfaction, after the bragging that he had made. Tommy did not flinch a bit; but accepted of my challenge with perfect readiness, and in three minutes we were hard at it on the top of the Langholmhill, surrounded by a motley crew of Borderers, of every age and sex. I was perfectly sober; and Potts, though not intoxicated, had drank a good deal. It was certainly owing to this that I found such a difference in his prowess from the time of our first combat. He fought with violence, but with little caution; and I felt as if he were nothing in my hands. I guarded against every

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trip, and warded every blow that he aimed with the greatest ease; but his arms were so long and powerful, that my strokes had little or no effect. I never was a good striker, and I could only strike with the right hand. At length, quite conscious of superiority, and perhaps on that account, I made a break at him, and seized him by the shoulder. He made a desperate exertion to free himself, but I seized him by the hair, and the right ear with the other hand, and, in spite of his struggles, closed with him, tripped the feet from him, and gave him a hearty fall. I then gave him two or three sanguine blows upon the temple and left eye, and sprung again to my feet. He was stunned; and, as he attempted to rise, I gave him a blow on the shoulder with the sole of my foot, which tumbled him over again, and always as he attempted to get up I repeated it, kicking him in this way down the Langholm-hill before me. He had not as yet yielded; but must have done so in less than two minutes, for he was quite exhausted. At that moment I was knocked down by a side stroke given me by some one, and it was never known by whom. The Borderers looked on their honour as being at stake in this encounter, and some one had most unwarrantably taken this method of retrieving the day. Jock Grieve blamed Glendinning, who denied it; and these two fought. However, Grieve beat him, and gave him a severe drubbing; but in a subsequent battle with John Glendinning, William's brother, one of the hardest fought that ever was fought, Grieve had rather the worst of it.

I saw nothing of these, having been led, or rather carried, into the tent from whence we issued. For a while I continued insensible, and had no recollection of any thing that had happened; but, after having drank a glass or two of wine, I believed myself recovered. I was grievously mistaken; for the stroke had been given with a staff, or some thick blunt instrument. My skull was slightly fractured, and though the

wound did not bleed, it swelled to an unusual size, and grew all discoloured. I was highly indignant at the foul play I had got, and expressed myself in bitter terms against the borderers in general. Indeed, every one, both friend and foe, were alike violent in their execrations of so base and cowardly an assault. But that which provoked me worst of all, was the word that was brought in to me, that Potts had bragged that he gave the blow himself, although at the very moment I was tossing him with my foot. All that I did afterwards, I did very wrong; for it was done in a rage, and whatever is done in that mood is ill done, and repented of. Had I held myself as I was, I had come off honourably enough, and the base conduct of my adversaries would have been universally reprobated; but I abused Potts, and threatened the utmost vengeance on him, as well as on his accomplice who had knocked me down. There were not wanting some to carry this news to Potts, who was soon found, and as ready either to fight me or shake hands with me as ever; the former of which I imprudently preferred. Alas! the tables were now fairly turned against me, as the stroke on my head had weakened my whole frame. I had no more strength to fight against a waking assailant than a man sleeping and struggling in a dream, and fell an easy prey to Potts. Still I refused to give in, though I could neither return a blow nor ward one; but the onlookers humanely separated us by force.

It was a twelvemonth before I overcame the effects of this blow, being troubled with a swimming in my head, and great debility; but before the expiry of that time, I had quite forgot my Border darling, or thought on her only as a natural curiosity. I was always a favourite with the girls, but never with their parents or guardian. I lost my first love (regretted to this hour) for never having asked her in marriage at any stated period; but grew careless, and so left her. I am persuaded I lost the next also, for never having asked her

for my wife at all; and I lost the third, the loveliest and richest of them all, the beautiful but unconscionable Jessy Armstrong, because I could not *lick Tommy Potts*.

Thus were the days of my youthful passion worn out. They had their delights; but they were not those delights on which recollection loves to dwell; to which the soul turns with serene satisfaction, as the dawnings of future felicity. They were meteors in the paths of folly, gilding the prospects of youth for a season with rays of the warmest and most brilliant hues; but they dazzled but to deceive, and left the headlong follower mixed in the pursuits, and obliged to pursue his devious course in darkness and uncertainty.

From this time forth, I formed no ardent attachment; I fell into one intrigue after another with my father's servant girls, and afterwards with my own, by some of whom I was much plagued, as well as palpably taken in. But for all those things I had no one to blame but myself; and, to my shame, I confess, that in such kind of courses was the prime of my manhood wasted; and they may say what they will, but every old bachelor has the same crimes to answer for, in a greater or less degree. On account of some of my misdemeanours, I next fell out with the minister and kirk-session of the parish, where I resided, because, forsooth, I would not submit to do penance publicly in the church, a foolish and injurious old popish rite, which I despised and abominated; and this misunderstanding caused me to lose a lady of fortune a very few years ago, whom I had courted for conveniency, and who, for conveniency's sake, and, as a last resource in the world of gallantry, had yielded to become my blooming bride. And this anecdote, as it is the last in my love adventures, shall be the last in this narrative.

I was introduced to this young lady of forty-five at Edinburgh, on my annual visit to that city, by a relation of my own. She had been handsome and beautiful, and she still look-

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ed very well, but then she was rouged most delicately. This I soon discovered, by observing that her ears and cheeks were of different hues, and I mentioned it to my relation, who smiled at me, and said, 'it was better that she should be painted with rouge than with strong liquors, for when a maid of fashion reached a certain period of life, she must paint either with the one or the other. I acquiesced in this sentiment, though I liked the painting very ill; and as I conceived it impossible for me to be in a state more unsociable than that in which I was, I paid my addresses to her the more briskly, perhaps because I did not care a farthing whether they were accepted or not. She received my addresses with the greatest politeness, and with a manner truly engaging. I liked her the better, and pushed my suit vehemently, in a correspondence that ensued. Her letters to me were filled with the most beautiful and sublime moral sentiments, with sometimes a dash of affected religious enthusiasm, but not a word of love, save that they always began with the endearing and familiar epithet, 'My dear sir.'

She was a paragon of sanctity and devotion, which I was not fully aware of, as I always suspect very high professions of religion. Her letters contained many hints, that she put the fullest confidence in me; yet on reviewing all that had past between us, I could not discover when she had ever confided any thing to me. They contained allusions to a supposed change of state, (between whom it was not mentioned,) but no promises. Such circumspection I had never witnessed before.

> Oh! she was perfect, past all parallel
> Of any modern female saint's comparison;—
> So far above the cunning powers of hell,
> Her guardian angel had given up his garrison.

Next summer she came to Moffat, on pretence of drink-

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ing the waters; but, in reality, on a reconnoitering expedition to inquire into my character and circumstances. About my fortune she did not care, as she had the means of repairing that; but what she valued as of far greater consequence, the Rev. Mr Johnson and Doctor Singers both spoke well of me. After this my reception was manifestly different, and the cordial shake of the hand, the kind and familiar flirtation, now showed me plainly that the nymph was all my own. I took her hand in mine, and asked her once more to be my wife. "Oh! Mr Cochrane, you are so cruel! You know that I can refuse you nothing; and you are taking advantage of my weakness, to make me change my pure uncontaminated virgin state for one of care and concern. It is not a light matter for an inexperienced creature like me to venture on becoming the head of a family, and the mother of a blooming offspring, whose souls may be required at my hand." "Hold!" said I, "my dear love; that is a secondary consideration, and I don't think that ever they will." This unlucky expression brought on me a torrent of argumentation, not whether, in the course of nature, my beloved could possibly give birth to a blooming offspring; oh no! such a thought as a negative to that never entered her brain; but whether or not parents were accountable for the sins of their children. She had the Scripture at her finger-ends, and gave me, *verbatim*, Thomas Vincent's Exposition on the Duties of Parents to their Children. Finally, however, she consented to become my bride, from an inward belief, as she plainly acknowledged, that it was the will of Heaven, and fore-ordained to be before the moon or stars were created; and that she might act in conformity with the first and great commandment, "Be ye fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."

All this was very well: but, unluckily for me, she came to our parish sacrament, as she went to every one in the bounds. I did not like to see her painted face there. An independent

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fortune is a snug thing for an old bachelor. On the fast-day, when the tokens of admission came to be distributed, I did well enough. I crushed down the stair near the latter end of the crowd, and stood decently in the area, holding my hat in my hand, and waiting as it were my turn. My saintly charmer saw this, and eyed me with looks of heavenly complacency; but when I came opposite to the front door, I slid quietly off, and was never missed. On the Sabbath following, I was not so fortunate when the sacred elements came to be distributed. Until after the first table was served, all went well enough, it having been filled up from the beginning by such of the common people as had not seats of their own. But it was, and is still a custom in our parish, (as absurd a one as can well be) that *the gentry*, as the country people call them, go all into the second table; and there did my charmer go, and there it behoved me to have been also. But there I was not; being obliged, from my disregard of church-discipline, to sit cocking up in the corner of the front gallery all alone. I was not wont to regard this much, as I had some neighbours in the parish, and particularly in the eastern gallery, opposite to me, I could distinctly perceive one in each corner; but I was all by myself, there not being one of the same station near me; and to make the matter worse, the precentor, as he bawled out the following line, looked full at me,—"Beside thee there is none!"

Sinners are always caught in the net, some time or other, which they themselves have prepared. The worst thing of all, my betrothed was so placed at the table, that her eye was fixed on me. She could not lift it but she saw me, and great was the perplexity which that eye manifested. I saw she knew not what to make of it; but, as I suspected, attributed it to the contempt of ordinances. She returned to Moffat in a post-chaise on the Monday evening, and I did not see her till toward the end of the week, when I again visited her. She

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had not got to the ground of the matter; but, suspecting me of infidelity, she entertained me with a long lecture on the truths of Christianity. I soon convinced her, that I had no doubts to be removed on that subject. "Why then do you not come forward at the sacrament, like other people?" said she. I never was so sore nonplused in my life, and could not answer a word. I did not like to tell a lady the plain truth, and had no tale ready to bring myself off—my face grew red, and I had no other shift but to take out my handkerchief on pretence to wipe it. "Why, ma'am," says I, "it is excessively warm in this room; do you not think it would be as well to open one of the windows?" "Certainly, if you wish it, sir," said she. I opened the window, thrust out my head, and said, "Bless me! how empty Moffat is at such a delightful season!" "Mr Cochrane!" exclaimed the lady, "what is the matter with you? Are you raving? I was talking to you of the bread of life, and the water of life, and asking your objections to the partaking of these; and you answer me, 'Bless me, how hot it is! how empty Moffat is!' What does this mean? When the relation in which we stand to one another is considered, I surely have a right to inquire into this most important of all concerns. Good Lord! if such a thing were to be, as that I should give up myself to lie in the arms of a castaway—a child of perdition, to whom it was predestined to go to hell—and then the iniquity of the father visited on my children!—I tremble to think of it. Tell me, then, my dear Mr Cochrane, and tell me truly, what is it that keeps you back from this ordinance?"

"Why, ma'am, really, ma'am," said I—"Hem—it is rather a delicate subject; but, in truth, ma'am, it is the minister and elders who keep me back." She turned up her eyes, and spread her hands towards heaven. "I see it all!—I perceive it all!" cried she, in holy wrath; "you are then an outcast from the visible church—an alien to the commonwealth of

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Israel—you are groaning under scandal, and sins not wiped away; and to ask my hand while in that state! How could I have set up my face among my religious acquaintances in town? How could I ever have looked the reverend and devout David D—— again in the face, or kneeled at a family ordinance with the Smiths, the Irvings, or the inspired H—— G——? And how should I have got my children, my offspring, initiated into the Christian Church? To have been obliged to take the vows on myself, and hold up the dear sweet innocents in my own arms! Oh! the snares, the shame, and the participation in iniquity, that I have thus providentially escaped—and all by attending to my religious duties! Let it be a warning to all such as deride them. Mr Cochrane, either go and submit to the censures of your mother church, for your flagrant and gross immoralities, and be again admitted as one of her members, and a partaker of all her divine ordinances, or never see my face again."

"I shall certainly conform to this friendly injunction for your sake, my dear," said I; "though the alternative may be severe, it must nevertheless be complied with. In the mean time, I must bid you a good morning." Then, bowing most respectfully, I left the room, fully determined which side of the alternative to choose.

From that time forth, I never saw my saintly dame any more; but I got one or two long letters from her, apparently intended to renew our acquaintance, as they were filled up with protestations of estèem, and long sentences about the riches of free grace, which I never read. I had got quite enough of her; for, to say the truth, though I believe it is a fault in me, I have an aversion to those ladies who make extravagant pretensions to religion, and am more afraid of them than any set of reformers in the realm.

Being determined that I would not stand up in my native parish church before a whole congregation, to every one of

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whom I was personally known, not only to be rebuked, but to hear the most gross and indelicate terms mouthed as applying to my character, and that with an assured gravity of deportment, which makes the scene any thing but impressive, save on the organs of risibility, or the more heart-felt inspirations of loathing. And as my nature could not submit to this, I was obliged to forego the blessings of a devout wife and an independent fortune. Thus it was that I lost my fourth and last mistress; namely, because *I would not mount the stool of repentance.*

Whenever I recounted any of these adventures to my social companions, I remarked that they generally amused them in no ordinary degree. It was this that determined me to make a copy of them, as near to the truth of the circumstances as my memory serves me, and to send them to you, as you are so fond of all narratives that tend to illustrate Scottish manners. I have thought it proper to change two or three of the real names; but the adventures are known to so many in the south-west of Scotland, that every individual concerned will be readily recollected; for, saving one gentleman, all the rest, as far as I know, are still alive.

COUNTRY DREAMS AND APPARITIONS.

No I.

JOHN GRAY O' MIDDLEHOLM.

THERE was once a man of great note, of little wit, some cunning, and inexhaustible good nature, who lived in the wretched village of Middleholm, on the border of Tiviotdale, to whom the strangest lot befell, that ever happened to a poor man be-

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fore. He was a weaver to his trade, and a feuar; about six feet four inches in height; wore a black coat with horn buttons of the same colour, each of them twice as broad and thick as a modern lady's gold watch. This coat had wide sleeves, but no collar, and was all clouted about the elbows and armpits, and moreover the tails of it met, if not actually overlapped each other, a little above his knee. He always wore a bonnet, and always the same bonnet, for aught that any one could distinguish. It was neither a broad nor a round bonnet, a Highland bonnet nor a Lowland bonnet, a large bonnet nor a small bonnet; nevertheless, it was a bonnet, and a very singular one too, for it was a *long bonnet*, shaped exactly like a miller's meal-scoop. He was altogether a singular figure, and a far more singular man. Who has not heard of John Gray, weaver and feuar in Middleholm?

John had a garden, which was a middling good one, and would have been better, had it been well sorted; he had likewise a cow that was a very little and a very bad one; but he had a wife that was the worst of all. She was what an author would call a half-witted inconsiderate woman; but the Middleholm wives defined her better, for they called her "a tawpie, and an even-down haverel." Of course John's purse was very light, and it would never throw against the wind; his meals were spare and irregular, and his cheek-bones looked as if they would peep through the face. It is impossible for a man to be in this state without knowing the value of money, or at least regretting the want of it. His belly whispers to him every hour of the day, that it would be a good thing to have; and when parched with drought of an evening, and neighbours are going into the alehouse to enjoy their crack and their evening draught, how killing the reflection, that not one penny is to spare! It even increases a man's thirst, drying the very glands of his mouth to a cinder.

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—It makes him feel more hungry, and creates a sort of void, either in idea or in the stomach, which it is next to impossible to fill up. Such power over the internal feelings has this same emptiness of the purse.

John had all these feelings most keenly in his way; for his sides were so long, and so lank, and enclosed such a bound of space, that it was no easy matter to fill it up. Now, it being a grand position in philosophy, that no space within the earth's atmosphere can remain a void, owing to the intolerable pressure of air, amounting to the inconceivable weight of fifteen pounds on every square inch, it may well be conceived what an insufferable column pressed constantly on John's spacious tube. Nothing gave John so much uneasiness as the constant suggestions of this invidious column of air.

There was but one thing on earth that could counter-work this pressure of elemental fluid, and keep it up to its proper sphere, and that was money. This was a grand discovery made by John, which Bacon himself never thought on, or thought of only to be completely mistaken. That sage says, "The state of all things here is, to extenuate, and turn things to be more pneumatical and rare; and not to retrograde from pneumatical to that which is dense." How absurd! It is evident that Mr Bacon had never been a feuar in Middleholm.

John's system was exactly the reverse of this, and it was the right one. He conceived, and felt, that the tangible part of the body ought always to prevail over the pneumatical; and then, as to the means of accomplishing this, he discovered that money—money alone—was the equivalent power that could equiponderate in such a case. But as to the means of procuring this great universal anodyne, that puzzled John more than the great discovery itself.

Every man, however, has some prospects, or at least some hopes, of increasing his stock of this material. John had his

hopes of doing so too; but no man, or woman either, will guess on what these hopes were founded. It could not possibly be by the profits of his weaving, at least with such a wife as he had; for John's proficiency in that useful art was far short of what is expected of a country weaver in those days. He could work a pair of blankets, or a grey plaid; but beyond that his science reached not. When any customer offered him a linen web, however coarse, or a brace of tablecloths, he modestly declined them, by assuring the goodwife, "that his loom didna answer thae kind o' things, and when fo'k teuk in things that didna answer their looms, they whiles fashed them mair than if they had keepit them out." It could not be by the profits of the miserable feu that he hoped to make money, for the produce of that was annually consumed before it came half to maturity. He had no rich friends; and his live stock consisted of, a small lean cow, two wretched-looking cats, a young one and an old one; six homely half-naked daughters, one son, and his wife, Tibby Stott.

But it is hard for a man to give up the idea of advancing somewhat in life, either by hook or by crook. To stand still, and stagnate as it were, or yield to a retrograde motion, are among the last things that the human mind assents to. John's never assented to any such thing. Notwithstanding all these disadvantages that marshalled against him, he had long-cherished and brilliant hopes of making rich; and that by the simplest and most natural way in the world, namely, by finding a purse, or *a pose*, as he more emphatically called it.

Was not John the true philosopher of nature? What others illustrated by theory, he exemplified in practice; namely, that the mind must grasp at something before. John longed exceedingly to have money—every other method of attaining it seemed fairly out of his reach, save this; and on this he

fixed with avidity, and enjoyed the prospect as much as one does who believes he must fall heir to an estate. He knew all the folks in the kingdom that had got forward in life by finding poses; but the greatest curiosity of all was, that he never believed money to be made in any other way. John never saw money made by industry in his life; there was never any made at Middleholm, neither in his days nor those of any other man, and what he had never seen exemplified he could not calculate on: so that, whenever he heard of a man in the neighbourhood who had advanced his fortune rapidly, John uniformly attributed it to his good fortune in having found a pose.

But it was truly amazing, how many of these he believed to be lying hid all over the country, especially in the vicinity of the old abbeys. And John reasoned in this manner: "The monks and the abbots amassed all the money in the country; they had the superiority of all the lands, and all the wealth, and all the rents at their control. Then, on the approach of any marauding army, it is well known that they went always out and hid their enormous wealth in the fields, from whence a great part of it was never again lifted." And then there were all the fields of battle, with which the Border counties abound, concerning which fields John argued in this way: "Suppose now there were 20,000 English and 15,000 Scots met on a field; there might be mony mae, and there might be fewer; but supposing there were so many, every one of these would hide his purse before he came into the battle, because he kend weel, that if he were either woundit or ta'en prisoner, he wad soon be strippit o' that. In ony o' thae cases, when it was hidden, he could get it again; whereas, if he was killed, it was o' nae mair use to him, an' was as weel there as in the hands o' his enemies. There was then 35,000 purses, or poses rather, a' hid in a very sma' bounds. An'

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then, to consider how many great battles war foughten a' o'er the country, an' often too when the tae party was laden wi' spulzie." In short, John believed that all these Border districts were lined with poses, and that we every day walked over immense sums of old sterling coinage.

He had several times visited the fields of Philliphaugh, of Middlestead, and Ancrum Moor; and on each of these he had delved a great deal, looking for poses; but, as he simply and good-naturedly remarked, never chanced to light on the right spot. For all that he was nothing discouraged, but every year grew more and more intent on realizing some of these hidden treasures.

He had heard of a large sum of money that was hid in a castle of Liddesdale, and another at Tamleuchar Cross; and of these two he talked so long, and so intently, that he resolved at last to go and dig, first for the one treasure, and then for the other. So one evening he got some mattocks ready, and prepared for his journey, being resolved to set out the next morning.

But that night he had a singular dream, or rather a vision, that deterred him. The narrative must be given in John's own words, as it has doubtless never been so well told by any other person. No one else could be so affected by the circumstances, and when the heart is affected, the language, however diffuse, has something in it that approximates to nature.

"I was lying in my bed, close yerkit against the stock; for my wife, poor creature! had twae o' the weans in ayont her, an' they war a' sniffin an' sleepin; an' there was I, lying thinking and thinking what I wad do wi' a' my money aince I had it howkit up; when, ere ever I wist, in comes an auld grey-headit man close to my bed-side. He was clad in a grey gown, like the auld monks lang syne; but he had nae cross hingin at his breast; an' he lookit me i' the face, an'

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says to me,—says he, 'John Gray o' Middleholm, do you ken me?' "Na, honest man," quo' I; "how should I ken you?"

"But I ken you, John Gray; an' I hae often been by your side, an' heard what ye war sayin, an' kend what ye war thinkin, an' seen what ye war doing, when ye didna see me. Ye're a very poor man, John Gray."

"Ye needna tell me that, honest man; there needs nae apparition come frae the dead to tell me that."

"An' ye hae a very ill wife, John Gray, an' a set o' ill-bred menseless bairns. Now, how mony o' them will ye gi'e me, an' I'll mak ye rich? Will ye gie me Tibby Stott hersel?"

"Weel I wat, honest man, she wad be better wi' ony body than me; but I can never gi'e away auld Tibby Stott, ill as she is, against her will. She has lien sae lang by my side, an' sleepit i' my bosom, that she's turned like a second nature to me; an' I trow we maun just tak the gude wi' the ill, an' fight thegither as lang as our heads wag abom the ground, though mony a sair heart an' hungry wame she has gart me dree." He then named ower a' the bairns to me, ane by ane, an' pled an' fleeched me for this an' the tither ane; but after a' he could say, an' a' the promises he could make, I wadna condescend to part wi' ane o' my bairns."

"John Gray o' Middleholm," quo' he, "ye're a great fool; I kend aye ye were a fool, an' a' the country kens it as weel as me; but ye're no just sae ill as I thought you had been. How do you propose to maintain a' thae tawpies, young an' auld?"

"Aye, that's the question, friend," quo' I; "an' it's easier to speer than answer it. But I hae a plan i' my head for that too; yet I dinna ken how far it may be advisable to tell you a' about it."

"O poor daft Jock Gray o' Middleholm!" quo' he; "ye're

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that lazy ye winna work, an' ye're that stupid that ye hae married a wife that canna work; an' ye hae gotten a bike o' gillygawpie weans, that ye're breedin up like a wheen brute beasts; an' the hale o' ye can neither work nor want; an' ye're gaun away the morn to mine the auld Castle o' Hermitage, an' carry away the mighty spoils that are hidden there; an' then ye're gaun away to Tamleuchar Cross,—

> To houk the pots o' goud, that lie
> Atween the wat grund an' the dry,
> Where grows the weirdest an' the warst o' weeds,
> Where the horse never steps, an' the lamb never feeds.

But, John Gray o' Middleholm, you'll never finger a plack o' thae twa poses, for the de'il keeps the tane, an' me the tither."

"Eh! gudesooth, friend, an that be the case, I fear I may drink to them. But wha are ye, an it may be speer'd?"

"I am ane that kens a' the secrets o' a' the hidden poses in Scotland, an' I'm a great friend to you, John Gray o' Middleholm."

"I'm unco glad to hear it, man; troth am I; I'm right blithe to hear it. Then there shall be houkin an' shoolin, countin an' coupin ower!"

"Nane where ye trow; for ye're but a short-sightit carle; an' the warst fau't that ye hae—ye're daft, John Gray. But if ye'll be ruled by me, I'll tell you where ye'll find a pose that will mak you a rich man for the langest day ye hae to live. Gang ye away down to the town o' Kelso, an' tak a line frae the end o' the auld brig to the north neuk o' the abbey, an' exactly at the middle step you will find a comically-shapen stane; raise ye up that when naebody sees, an' there you will find an auld yettlin oon-pan filled fu' o' goud an' siller to the very e'e."

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"But, friend, I never was at Kelso, an' I never saw either the brig or the abbey-kirk; an' how am I to find the stane? an', ower an' aboon a', gin I fa' to an' houk up the fok's streets, what will they say to me?"

"Weel, weel, tak your ain way, John Gray; I hae tauld ye. But ye're daft, poor man. There, ye're gaun away to mine a' the vaults o' the biggest castle o' Liddesdale, an' then ye're gaun to trench a hale hill-side at Tamleuchar, a' upon mere chance; an' here I tell you where the pose is lying, an' ye'll no be at the pains to gang an' turn ower ae stane an' lift it. Ye're clean daft, John Gray o' Middleholm; but I hae tauld ye, sae tak your ain daft gate." "An' wi' that the auld body elyed away, an' left me. I was sae grieved that he had gane away in a pet, for he was the very kind o' man I wantit, that I hollo'd, an' called after him, as loud as I could, to come back. But, gude sauf us a'! at that moment my wife, Tibby Stott, poor creature! wakened me; for I was roaring through my sleep, an' the hale had been a dream."

John was terribly puzzled next day, and knew not which way to proceed. He did not like to go to hand-gripes with the devil, after such a warning as he had got, and therefore he judged it as safe to delay storming his Castle of Hermitage, till he considered the matter more maturely. On the other hand, it was rather ungenerous to go and seize on his friend's treasure at the Cross of Tamleuchar, after such a friendly visit; and he feared, likewise, that the finding of it was very uncertain; yet he did not know but this might be some malicious spirit, whose aim was to put him by getting the money. And as to Kelso, he had never thought of it before; and it took such a long time to train his ideas to any subject, that he never once thought of going there: so all the schemes were postponed for some time.

"A while after that," says John, "I was sitting at my

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loom, an' I was workin an' workin, an' thinkin an' thinkin how to get ane o' thae hidden poses. 'I maun either hae a pose soon,' says I to mysel, 'or else I maun dee o' hunger; an' Tibby Stott, poor creature! she maun dee o' hunger; an' a' my innocent bairns maun dee o' hunger, afore I get them up to do for theirsels.' Thae war heavy concerns on me, an' I was sair dung down; when, or ever I wist, in comes my auld friend, the grey-headit monk. 'John Gray o' Middleholm,' quo' he, 'do you ken me?' "Ay, that I do, honest man, an' weel to. Right blithe am I to see your face again, for I was unco vexed when ye gaed away an left me sae cuttitly afore."

"'Ye're a daft man, John Gray, that's the truth o' the matter; but ye hae some good points about ye, an' I'm your friend. Ye say ye dinna ken Kelso, nor the place where the pose is lying: now, if ye'll gang wi' me, I'll let you see the very place, an' the very stane that the money is lying aneath; an' if ye winna be at the pains to turn it ower an' take the pose, I'll e'en gi'e it to some ither body: I hae tauld ye, John Gray o' Middleholm.'

"Dinna gi'e it to nae ither body, an it be your will, honest man," quo' I—I says till him—"an' I's gang w'ye, fit for fit, when ye like." Sae up I gets, just as I was workin at the loom, wi' my leather apron on, an' a rash o' loom-needles in my cuff; an' it wasna a rap till we were at Kelso, where I soon saw the situation o' the town, an' the brigg, an' the auld abbey. Then he takes me to a stane, a queer three-neukit stane, just like a cockit hat. 'Now,' says he, 'John Gray o' Middleholm, the siller's in aneath this, but it winna be very easily raised: put ye a mark on it, till ye get mattocks an' a convenient time, for I maunna be seen here.' I first thought o' leaving my apron on it, but thinking that wad bring a' the fock o' the town, I took ane o' the loom-needles to stick in beside it, thinking naebody wad notice that.

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Bless me! friend, quo' I, this is the saftest an' the smoothest stane that ever I fand in my life; it is surely made o' chalk; an' wi' that, I rammed ane o' the loom needles down through the middle o' the stane into the very head. But I hadna' weel done that, afore there was sic yells an' cries rase out frae aneath the stane, as gin a' the devils o' hell had been broken loose on me; an' the blood sprang frae the chalk stane; an' it spoutit on my hands, an' it spoutit on my face, till I was frightit out o' my wits! Sae I bang'd up, an' ran for bare life; but sic a fa' as I got! I had almost broken my neck. Where think ye I had been a' the time, but lyin' sound sleepin' i' my bed; an' instead o' rinning the needle into the three-neukit stane, I had rammed it to the head in the haunch o' Tibby Stott, poor creature. Then there was sic a whillibalu as never was heard! An' she threepit, an' insistit on me, that I was ettling to murder her. 'Dear Tibby Stott, woman,' quo' I; 'Tibby,' says I to her, 'If I had been ettling to murder you, wadna' I hae run the loom needle into some other part than where I did? It will be lang or ane murder ye on the hip an' thigh, Tibby Stott, especially wi' a loom needle.'

"I had now gotten Kelso sae completely i' my head, that away I sets again, to see, at least, if the town was set the same way as I had seen it in my vision. I fand every thing the same; the brig, the auld abbey, an' the three-neukit stane shapit like a cockit hat, mid-way between them; but I coudna' get it houkit, for the fo'k were a' gaun asteer, an' ay this ane was spying an' looking at me, an' the tither ane was spying an' looking at me. Sae I hides my mattocks in a corner o' the auld abbey-kirk, an' down I gaes to saunter a while about the water side, to see if the Kelso fo'k wad settle within their ain doors, an' mind their ain business. I hadna' been lang at the water side, till I sees a hare sitting sleeping in her den. Now, thinks I, that would be a good dinner for Tibby an' the bairns, an' me. Sae I slides away very cunningly,

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never letting wit that I saw her; but I had my ee gledgin' out at the tae side; an' as soon as I wan fornent her, I threw mysel' crop aboon her a' my length. Then she waw'd, an' she scream'd, an' she sprawled, till I thought she wad win away frae me; but at length I grippit her by the throat. 'Ye auld witch, that ye are,' quo' I; 'I's do for ye now. But, wi' that, the hare gae me sic a drive wi' a' her four feet at ance, that she gart me flee aff frae aboon her like a drake into the hard stanes at the water side, till I was amaist fell'd. An' there I lay groaning; an' the hare she lay i' the bit screamin. Pity my case! where had I been a' the time, but sound sleepin' i' my ain bed? An' instead o' catchin' a hare, I had catch'd naething but auld Tibby Stott, poor creature; an' had amaist smothered her an' choakit her into the bargain.

"I was really excessively grieved this time; but what could I help it? I ran an' lightit a candle; an' I thought my heart should hae broken, when the poor thing got up on her bare knees, an' beggit me to spare her life. 'Dear Tibby Stott!' quo' I: 'Tibby, my woman,' I says to her, 'It will be the last thing that ever I'll think of to harm your life, poor creature!' says I.

"Na, na, but John, I heard ye ca' me an awfu' like name for a man to ca' his wife; an' ye said that ye wad do for me now."

"'Tibby Stott, my woman,' quo I; 'I'm really sorry for what has happened; but ye maun forgi'e me, for in faith an' troth I thought ye war a hare.'

"A hare! Na, na, John, that winna gang down—Had ye said ye thought I was a mare, or a caumel, I might hae excused ye. I'm sure there wad hae been far less difference in size wi' the tane as the tither."

"Tibby Stott's no that far wrang there, thinks I to mysel, horn daft as she is."

"But, John, what did ye tak me for the ither night, when ye stickit me wi' a loom needle into the bane?"

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"'Indeed, Tibby, I'm amaist ashamed to say it; but I thought ye war a three-neukit stane, i' the shape of a cockit hat.'"

When Tibby Stott heard this, she drew quietly to her clothes, and hastened out of the house. She was now quite alarmed, thinking that her husband had lost his reason; and, running to one of the neighbouring cottages, she awakened the family, and related to them her tale of dismay; informing them, that her husband had, in the first place, mistaken her for a three-cornered stone, and had stabbed her through the haunch with a loom needle. This relation only excited their merriment; but when she told them, that a few minutes ago he had mistaken her for a hare, and, getting above her, had seized her by the throat, trying to worry her for one, it made them look aghast, and they all acquiesced in the belief, that John had been bitten by a mad dog, and was now seized with the malady; and that, when he tried to worry his wife for a hare, he had believed himself to be a dog, a never-failing symptom of the distemper. Their whole concern now was, how to get the poor children out of the house; for they dreaded, that, on the return of his fit, he might mistake them all for hares crouching in their dens, and worry every one of them. Two honest weavers therefore volunteered their services to go and reconnoitre, and to try if possible to get out the unfortunate children.

Now it so happened, that John was curiously engaged at the very time that these men went to the window, which was productive of another mistake, and put the villagers into the most dreadful dismay. As soon as he observed that Tibby Stott stayed so long away from her bed, he suspected that she had left the house; and, on rising to search for her, he soon found his conjecture too true. This he regretted, thinking that she would make fools both of herself and him, a thing which John accounted very common for wives to do, as the man had no better experience; and, not doubting but that his presence

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would be likely to make things worse, he awoke the eldest girl, whose name was *Grace*, (the most unappropriate one that could have been bestowed,) and desired her to go and bring back her mother. At first she refused to move, grumbling excessively, and bidding her father go himself; but John, at last, by dint of expostulation, getting her to comply, she requested him to bring her some clothes, and her stockings and shoes from beyond the fire. John called her a good girl, and ran, naked as he was, to bring her apparel. The clothes he found as she directed him, and hastening to the form beyond the fire to bring her stockings and shoes, he set down the lamp and lifted them. The stockings being tied together by a pair of long red garters, John found that he could not carry them all conveniently, so he took the clothes and the shoes in one hand, the lamp in the other, and the staniraw stockings and red garters, in his hurry, he took in his teeth. In this most equivocal situation was John first discovered by the two men as they peeped in at the window, on which they fled with precipitation, while their breasts were throbbing with horror.

When they returned to the house which they had lately left, they found a number of the villagers assembled, all gaping in dismay at the news, that *the lang weaver*, as they always styled John Gray, was gone mad, and had tried to worry his wife for a hare. Scarcely had they swallowed this uncommon accident, when the two men entered; and the additional horror of the party may hardly be described, when they told what they had seen, "Mercy on us a', sirs!" cried they, "what will be done? John Gray has worried ane o' the lasses already; an' we saw him wi' our een, rinning up an' down the house naked, wi' her claes a' torn i' the tae hand, an' her heart, liver, and thrapple in his teeth, an' his een glancin' like candles!" The women uttered an involuntary scream; the men groaned in spirit; and the Rev. John Matthews, the Antiburgher minister of the village, who had likewise been

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called up, and had joined the group, proposed that they should say prayers. The motion was agreed to without a division; the minister became a mouth, as he termed it, to the party, and did not fail to remember the malady of the lang weaver, and the danger to which his children were exposed.

While they were yet in the midst of their devotions, the amiable Grace Gray entered, inquiring for her mother; but, after many interrogations, both by the minister and others, the villagers remained in uncertainty with regard to the state of John's malady until it was day. But then, on his appearance, coming in a hurried manner toward the house to seek his wife and daughter, there was such a dispersion! He ran, and she ran, and there was no one ran faster than the Antiburgher minister, who escaped praying, as he flew, that the Lord would make his feet as the feet of hinds upon the mountains. However, the whole fracas of John's hydrophobia ended without any thing very remarkable, save these: that Tibby Stott asked her daughter with great earnestness, "Whilk o' them it was that was worried? an' hoped in God that it wasna little Crouchy." This was a poor decrepid, insignificant child, who was, however, her mother's darling, and whose loss would have been more regretted by her than all the rest of the family put together. The other remarkable circumstance was, that the story had spread so rapidly, that it never could be recalled or again assimilated to the truth, and it is frequently related as a fact over all the south country to this day, among the peasantry. Many a time have I heard it, and shuddered at the story; and I am sure many, into whose hand these tales may fall, have likewise heard the woful relation, that a weaver in Middleholm was once bit by his own terrier, and that, five years afterwards, he went mad, and tried to worry his wife, who escaped; but that he succeeded in worrying his daughter, and, on the neighbours assembling and breaking into the house,

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that he was found in the horrible guise in which the two men had described him.

John continued to be eyed with dark and lurking suspicion for some time; but he cared very little about such vulgar mistakes, for his mind was more and more taken up about finding poses. This reiterated vision of the old gray-headed monk, the town of Kelso, the bridge, the abbey, and the three-neukit stane like a cockit hat, had now taken so full and ample possession of his brain, that he thought of it all day, and by night again visited it in his dreams. Often had he been there in idea, and, as he believed, in spirit, while his mortal part was lying dormant at the wrong side of Tibby Stott; but, at the long and the last, he resolved to go there in person, and, at all events, to see if the town was the same as had been represented to him in his visions.

Accordingly, John set out, one morning early in the spring, on his way to the town of Kelso; but he would neither tell his wife, nor any one about Middleholm, where he was going, or what he was going about. He went as he was, with his staff in his hand, and his long bonnet on his head, without any of his mattocks for digging or heaving up broad stones, although he knew that purses were generally hid below them. Therefore John felt as disconsolate by the way as a parish-minister does who goes from home to preach without a sermon in his pocket, or like a warrior going out to battle without his armour or weapons. He had, besides, but very little money in his pocket; only a few halfpence, and these he found could be but ill spared at home; and the only hope he had, was in the great sum of money that lay hid beneath the three-neukit stane like a cockit hat, which stane, he knew, lay exactly mid-way between the end of the bridge and the north corner of the abbey.

John arrived at the lovely town of Kelso a little before the going down of the sun, and immediately set out about surveying the premises; but, to his great disappointment, he found

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that nothing was the same as it had been shown to him in his dream. The town and the abbey were both on the wrong side of the river, and he scarcely felt convinced that it was the same place. Moreover, the middle space between the end of the bridge and the abbey it was impossible to fix on, owing to some houses that interrupted the line. However, he looked narrowly and patiently all the way, from the one to the other, for the three-cornered stone, often stopping to scrape away the dust with his hands or feet from the sides of every broad one, to ascertain its exact form. He found many broadish stones, and some that inclined a little to a triangular form, but none of them like the one he had dreamed of; though there were some that he felt a strong inclination to raise up, merely that he might see what was below them.

But the more he looked, the better was he convinced, that the middle space between the abbey and the bridge was occupied by an old low-roofed house, within which the three-cornered stone, and the pose of course, behoved to be. Four or five times, in the course of his investigations, did John draw near to the door of this house, and every time stood hesitating whether or not he should enter; but, as he had resolved to tell his errand to no one living, not for fear of being laughed at, but for fear any one should come between him and the pose, he declined going in.

Not having enough of money to procure himself a night's lodging at an inn, he went and bought a pennyworth of bread at a baker's shop, that he might not be chargeable to any one; and, going down to the side of the river, he made a hearty supper on his roll, drinking a little pure water to it. It was here that John, to his infinite pleasure, first discovered a similarity between his vision and the existing scene. For, be it remembered, that, in one of his dreams, he went down to the side of the river Tweed to while away the time, and there discovered a hare sitting in her form. He now remem-

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bered having seen this very scene in his dream, which he now looked on, all in the same arrangement, and thenceforward felt a conviction, that this vision would not go for nothing. He then went into a narrow street that stretched to the eastward, as he described it, and went on till he heard the well-known sound of the jangling of weavers' treadles. As the proverb goes, "Birds of a feather flock ay thegither;" into that house John went, and asked the privilege of a bed, telling them, he himself was a poor weaver, who had come a long journey, in hopes to recover a large sum of money in the town, but not having as yet been successful, he had not wherewith to pay his night's lodging at an inn. The honest people made him very welcome, for the people of that beautiful town, from the highest to the lowest, are noted for a spirit of benevolence. But they tried in vain to pry into his business, and to learn who the creditor was from whom he expected to recover the sum of money. John, on the other hand, was very inquisitive of his host about the old abbey—what sort of people the monks were—how they were dressed, and if they had much money—what they did with it on a sudden invasion by the English? and, in particular, *Where he supposed to be exactly the middle space between the bridge and the abbey?* The man answered all his queries civilly; and, though he sometimes suspected his guest of a little derangement in intellect, gave him what information he could on these abstruse points; manifesting all the while, however, a disposition rather to enter into a debate about some of the modern tenets of religion. This John avoided as much as possible; for, though John was an Antiburgher, he knew little more about the matter, save that his sect was right, and all the rest of the world wrong, which was quite sufficient for him; but, finding that the Kelso weaver was not disposed so readily to admit this, he waived the engagement from time to time, and always introduced the more interesting, and not less mysterious subject, of purses hidden in the earth.

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Next morning John was early astir, and busily engaged in search of the three-cornered stone; but still with the same success; and ever and anon his investigations brought him to the door of the low-roofed ancient house before mentioned, which he still surveyed with a wistful look, as if desirous to enter. The occupier of this old mansion was a cobbler, a man stricken in years, who had a stall in the one end of it, while his wife and daughter kept a small fruit-shop in the other, and by these means earned a decent livelihood. This cobbler, being a very industrious man, was at his work both late and early, and had noted all John's motions the evening before, as well as that morning. Curious to know what were the stranger's motives in prying so much about his door, he went out and accosted him, just as he was in the act of stooping to clean the dust away from the sides of a broad stone to see what shape it was. As he spoke, John turned round his head and looked at him; but he was so amazed at the figure he saw, that he could not articulate a syllable. "What's the matter w'ye, friend?" said the cobbler; "or what is it you hae lost?" John still could not speak a word; but there he stuck, with one knee leaning on the ground, his muddy hands hanging at a distance from his body, like a man going to leap, his head turned round, and his mouth open, gaping on this apparition of a cobbler. The latter, at once conceiving that he had addressed a maniac, stood and gazed at him in silence and pity. John was the first who broke silence, and certainly his address had not the effect of removing the cobbler's apprehensions. "The warld be a wastle us! friend, is this you?" said John. "There's nae doubt o't ata', man," returned the cobbler; "this is *me*, as sure as that is *you*; but wha either you or me is, I fancy me or you disna very weel ken." "Honest man, do you no ken me?" said John; "tell me honestly, did you never see my face afore?" "Why," said the cobbler, "I now think I have seen it before; but where,

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I do not recollect." "Was it in the night-time or the day-time that you saw me?" said John. "Certainly, never in the night-time," returned the cobbler. "Then I fancy I am wrang," said John; "I'm forgetting mysel', an' no thinkin' what I'm speakin' about; but I aux your pardon." "O there's nae offence, honest friend," quoth the cobbler; "no ae grain: It is only a sma' mistake; you thought it was *me*, and I thought it was *you*, an' it seems it turns out to be neither the one nor the other." The cobbler's wit was lost upon John, who again sunk into silence, and gazed; for he saw that this ancient cobbler was the very individual person that had appeared to him in his sleep, and told him of the treasure. And, still to approximate the vision closer to reality, the cobbler wore a large three-cockit hat on his head. John was in utter consternation, and knew not what to make of it. He saw that it was not a three-neukit stane which the cobbler wore on his head, and though very like one in colour, yet that it had once been felt. Still the hat had such a striking resemblance to the stone which John had so often seen in his vision, that he was satisfied the one was represented by the other. He saw there was something extraordinary in the case, and something that boded him luck; but how to solve this mystery of the three-neukit stane and the cockit hat, John was greatly at a loss. He had no doubt that he had found the cue to the treasure; for he had found this cockit hat exactly mid-way between the bridge and the north corner of the abbey, as nearly as he could judge or measure. It was not indeed a three-neukit stane, but it was very like one; and at any rate, it was the very thing, shape, and size, and all, that he had dreamed about, and under which he had been assured the gold was hid. Above all, here was the very person, in form, voice, size, and feature, whose image had appeared to him in his sleep, and had held repeated conversations with him on the subject of the hidden pose; but then,

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what was there below the hat save the cobbler, and he could not possibly be a pan full of gold and silver? The coincidence was however too striking to be passed over without scrutiny. Even the wisest of men would have been struck with it, and have tried to find out some solution; and curious would I be to know what a wise man, in such a case, would have thought of the matter.

John, as I said, was the philosopher of nature, and always fixed on the most obvious and simple solutions, in determining on effects from their general causes. He first asked of the cobbler a sight of his hat; which being granted, he looked inside of it; but perceiving that there was neither money nor lining of any sort there, he returned it, saying, it was a curious hat. He then asked the cobbler, seriously, if he had never swallowed any gold. The other said, he had not to his knowledge. "At least," said John; "you certainly could not swallow any very large quantity? Very weel, then, frien'; if ye'll be sae gude as to stand a wee bit back." The cobbler did so; and John, marking the precise spot where he had been standing, and on which he had first seen him in his real corporeal being, went directly to procure mattocks to dig with, thinking it would to a certainty be below that spot, and of course virtually covered by the hat at the time he first saw its ample and triangular form.

He soon got a pick and spade, and fell to digging on the side of the narrow street with all expedition, to the great amusement of the old cobbler, who, for fear of incurring blame from his townsmen, went into his stall, and awaited the issue of this singular adventure.

Poor John was hungry, and the column of air was become so oppressive on him, that he felt as if his life depended on his success, and wrought with no ordinary exertion. The pit waxed in its dimensions, and deepened exceedingly. He first came to sand, then to the loam, at which time his hopes

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ran very high, for he found two or three small bones, which he was sure had once formed a part of the body of some immensely rich abbot; and finally he came to a stiff, almost an impenetrable till. Nevertheless he continued to dig, until the town's people, beginning to move about as the morning advanced, gathered about him, and asked him what he meant. He desired them to mind their own business, and let him mind his; and on this the first comers went away, thinking he was a man employed in repairing the street; but it was not long ere two town officers arrived, and forced him to desist, threatening, that if he refused to comply, and to fill up the hole exactly as he found it, they would carry him to prison, and have him punished. John was forced to yield, and once more abandon his golden dream. He filled up the pit with evident marks of chagrin and disappointment, some averring that they even saw the tears dropping from his eyes, and mixing with the gravel. He had now nothing for it, but to return as he came, and apply to the wretched loom once more. He even knew not where he was to procure a breakfast, and still less how Tibby Stott, poor creature! and the children, were breakfasting at home. The officers asked him whence he came, and what he wanted; but he refused to satisfy them; and after he had made the street as it was, and to their satisfaction, they left him.

There was something so whimsical in all that the cobbler had witnessed, that he determined, if possible, to find out something of the man's meaning. He dreaded that he was a little deranged in his intellects; still there was a harmless simplicity about the stranger that interested him; and he thought he discerned glimpses of shrewdness that could not possibly be inherent in an idiot. Accordingly, as soon as the crowd had dispersed, and John had lifted his plaid and staff, and blown his nose two or three times, as he took a last look of the bridge and the old abbey, the cobbler went out to him,

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addressed him with kindness, and beseeched him to go in, and take share of his breakfast.

Thankfully did John accept of the invitation, and seldom has a man done more justice to his entertainer's hospitality, than our hero did that morning. After despatching a bowlfull of good oatmeal porridge, washed down with a bottle of brisk treacle ale, the cobbler's daughter presented them with a large cut of broiled salmon. This rich and solid fare answering John's complaint exceedingly well, he set to it with so much generous avidity, that the cobbler restrained himself, and suffered his guest to realise the greater part of it. The delightful sensations excited by this repast raised John's heart a little above his late disappointment, and even before the salmon was finished, he had begun to converse with some spirit. But his sphere of conversation was rather of a circumscribed nature, being confined to one object, namely, that of poses hidden in the earth, with its collateral branches. He asked the cobbler what sort of men the monks were, who had lived in that grand abbey—of the abbots that governed them—the sources of their great riches, and how they disposed of these on any invasion by the English.

There was no subject on which the cobbler loved more to converse, having himself come of that race, and, as he assured John, the sixth in descent from the last abbot and a lady of high quality; he, and his forebears so far back, having been the fruits of a Christmas confession; and that, had the establishment still continued, he would in all likelihood have at that day been abbot himself. He shewed John an old charter on emblazoned vellum, granted by Malcolm the fourth to the abbey of Kelso, on the removal of the Cistertian Monks from Selkirk to that place; and he talked so long on the customs and usages of the monks, the manner of lives they led, their fasts, holidays, and pilgrimages, that John never thought

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to be so weary of monachism; no mention having ever been made of their poses in all this lengthened discourse.

After breakfast, the cobbler pledged John in a bumper of brandy, and then handed his guest another, which John took with a blushing smile, and, after holding it up between him and the light, to enjoy its pure dark colour, he drank to the good health of the cobbler; and, as the greatest blessing on earth that he could think of, wished he might find a good pose.

The cobbler, thinking he now had his guest in the proper key, asked him to explain to him, if he pleased, the motives of his procedure that morning and last night? John laughed with a sly leer, bit his lip, and, looking at the women who were bustling but and ben, at length told his host, that if he was to tell him that, he must tell him by himself; on which they went into the stall, and after John had desired the cobbler to shut the door, he addressed him as follows:

"Now, ye see, friend, ye're sic an honest kind man, that I canna refuse to tell you ony thing; an' for that cause, I'll tell you the plain truth; but, as I ken you will think me a great fool, I'll neither tell you my name, nor my wife's name, nor the name o' the place where I bide; but it is a wee bit out o' Kelso; no very far; I can gang hame to my dinner. Ye maun just let that satisfy you on that score. Weel, ye see, disna I dream ae night, that there's an auld oon pan, fu' o' gold an' silver, hidden aneath a queer shapen stane, exactly mid-way atween the end o' your brig an' the north neuk o' the auld abbey there; an' I dreamed it sae aft, that I could get nae rest; for troth it was like to mislead me, an' pit me by mysel a' thegither. To sickan a height did the fleegary rin in my imagination, (hee, hee, hee! Is the door closs, think ye?) that I mistook the stane that was happin the pose, and, meaning to pit a mark in it to ken it by, (Will naebody hear us, think ye?) disna I rin a lang sharp bodkin into the

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head i' the rang side o' my wife, poor creature! till I e'en gart her skirl like a gait, an' was amaist fleyed her out o' her wits. An' there was ae night after that, she ran a greater risk still. Sae, troth, just to prevent me frae fa'ing till her wi' a pick an' a spade some night, an' to see gin it wad help me to ony better blink o' rest, I was fain to come to Kelso yestreen, to see if there was sic a thing or no. An' this morning, when you and I first met, for reasons that I needna an' canna weel explain, I thought I had found the very spot. Now, that's the main truth, an' I daresay you will think me a great fool."

The cobbler, who was mightily amused by this statement of facts, answered as follows: "A man, my good friend, may act foolishly at a time, an' yet no be a'thegither a fool. To be a fool, you see, is to—is to—In short, it's to be a fool—a born fool like. But it is a Gallic word that, an' has mony meanings. Now, dreaming disna make a man a fool; but it makes him a fool sae far, that he may play the fool in his dream. He may rise in his sleep, an' play the fool; but if he dinna play the fool after he wakens, he canna just be ca'd an absolute fool. But it is the fool, who, after he has dreamed, takes a' his dreams for reality. At least, it is acting very foolishly to do that." "I thought your speech wad land there," said John. "No, but stay till I explain myself," said the cobbler. "O, ye needna fash, the thing's plain enough," said John; "I maun think about setting awa' hame." "Stop a wee bit, man," said the cobbler, taking hold of John's coat as he was rising, "I hae a queer story to tell you about a purse afore ye gang away, that will explain the matter wi' mair clearness an' precision than a' the learning an' logic that I'm master o'.

"It is ower true, what I maun tell you, honest man, that I am very ill for dreaming mysel, an' mony a wild unsonsy dream I hae had; an' the mair I strave against it, I grew

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aye the waur. When I was a young cheild, there was hardly a night that I didna dream I was a monk, an' confessing some ane or ither o' the bonny lasses an' wives about Kelso. An' sic tales as I thought they tauld me! Then, when I saw them again sittin' i' the kirk, wi' their douse decent faces, I coudna get their confessions out o' my mind, gude forgi'e me! an' I had some kind o' inklin' about my heart, that they were a' true. There was the folly o' the thing! Then I had nae sooner closed my een the neist night than I was a monk again, and hard engaged at the auld business. There was ane Bess Kelly, a fine spankin' lass, that a' the lads were like to gang wudd about; I'm sure I confessed Bess mair nor a hunder times i' my sleep, an' mony was the sin I pardoned til her." John chuckled, and grinned, and made every now and then a long neck by the cobbler, to see if the door was close enough shut; but when he reached thus far, John rose, passed him, and felt the latch; and though the door was shut, he gave it a push with his shoulder, to make it, if possible, go a little closer. "Friend, I can tell you," said John; "there may be here that ken, an' here that dinna ken; but that's a very queer story. So you always dreamed you were a monk?" "So often," said the cobbler, "that the idea became familiar to me; and even in the day time, I often deemed myself one." "So did I," said John; "it became familiar to me too, and I thought you a monk both by night and by day." The cobbler stared at John, and thought him mad in good earnest; but the latter, feeling that he was going to divulge more perhaps than prudence and caution with regard to hidden poses warranted, corrected himself by saying, that he thought he resembled one of that order, in his grave decent appearance, which was all he meant to say. The cobbler then went on.

"Weel, I'm no yet come to the story I was gaun to tell you. I had sic a dream last night, as I hae nae had these twenty years; and, I think, I never had sic a queer dream in my

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life. An' then it was sae like your ain, too; for it was about a hidden purse." "Aye aye, man!" said John, "Gude sauf us! what was't? but stop a wee till I see if the door be close steekit." John again felt the door, gave it another push, and then sat down, with open mouth and ears, to drink in the story of the cobbler's dream.

"I was as usual a monk, and had gane out after vespers to take a walk by the side o' the Tweed; an' as I was gaun down by the boat-pool foot, I sees an ill-faur'd-looking carle, something like yoursel', sitting eating a roll, an' he'd a living hare lying beside him that he had catched in her den."—"Hout, friend!" said John, "but did you really dream that?" "In very deed I did," said the cobbler, "why do you doubt it?" "Because, friend," said John, "they may be here that ken, an' here that dinna ken; but that's a very queer dream indeed." "There's nae doubt o't," said the cobbler; "but stay till you hear it out. Weel, I says to the carle, (he was very like you,) friend, will you sell your hare?" 'Hout na, quo' he, 'you palmer bodies are a' poor, ye hae nae sae muckle siller atween you an' poverty as wad buy my hare. Ye're a very poor man, monk, for a' the rich confessions ye hae made, an' ye're a daft man, that's waur; but, an' ye wad like to be rich, I can tell you where you will get plenty o' goud an' siller.' "I thankit the carle, an' said there were few that wadna' like to be richer than they were, an' I had nae objections at a' to the thing." 'Weel, weel,' quo' he; 'he that hides kens best where to seek; but there was mony ane i' the days o' langsyne, wha hadd weel, but never wan back to howk again. Gang ye your ways west the country the morn, an' spier for a place they ca' Middleholm; an' when ye come there, speer for a man they ca' John Gray. Gang ye into his garden, an' ye will find thirteen apple-trees in it, six at the head, an' six at the foot, an' ane in the middle.'—'Hout, friend!' said John, interrupting him, 'but are ye no joking? did you really dream

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that?' "As sure as yon sun is in the heaven, I did," said the cobbler; "why should you doubt it?" 'Because ye see, friend,' said John, 'they are here that ken an' here that dinna' ken; but, let me tell you, that's a very queer dream indeed. Weel, what did the fearsome carle say mair?'

"'Gang ye into that garden,' quo' he, 'an' begin at the auld apple-tree in the middle, an' howk deep in the yird below that tree; an' you will find an auld pan filled fu' o' money to the ee. When ye hae disposed o' that, if ye like to gang back to that man's garden, an' howk weel, you will find a pose o' reid goud aneath every apple-tree that's in it.' Now, wadnae ye hae reckoned me as a fool if I had taen a' this for truth? an' thought I was acting very foolishly, if I had gane away into the west country, asking for a place an' a man that perhaps hae nae existence? To hae gane about, as our school rhyme says, spearing for

> 'The town that ne'er was framed,
> An' the man that ne'er was named,
> The tree that never grew,
> An' the bird that never flew.'

'O there's nae doubt o' the thing, friend, it wad hae been great nonsense—there's nae doubt o't at a'. But yet, for a' that, it's the queerest dream, ae wáy an' a' ways, that I ever heard i' my life; an' I hae a great mind to gang an' speer after the place an' the man mysel'. If I get as good a breakfast, an' as good a dram, as I did for the last pose I howkit, my labour winna' be lost a'thegither.'

The cobbler laughed, and wished John all manner of success; and the latter parted from him with many professions of esteem; and, in higher spirits than ever he was before, he went straight home to Tibby Stott and Middleholm, and prepared next morning to begin and root up the old apple-tree in the middle of the garden. Now, there were exactly thirteen trees

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in it, as the cobbler said; a circumstance of which the owner was not aware till that very night when he returned from Kelso.

Poor Tibby Stott was right glad to see her husband again, for the report in the village was, that he had run away mad; and, as the country people were in terrible alarm about that time for mad dogs, and pursuing and killing them every day, Tibby dreaded that poor John would be shot or sticked with long forks, like the rest. She viewed him at first with a jealous eye; but, on seeing him so good-humoured and kind to the children and herself, she became quite reconciled to him, and wept for joy, poor creature! at getting him back again; for she found she would have been utterly helpless without him, although ten times a-day she called him *a cool-the-loom*. John told her how he had travelled to Kelso, and spent a day and a night there on some important business, and had only wared one penny; and, among other things, how he had learned to cultivate his garden so as to make it produce great riches.

Next morning, as soon as it was day, John began a digging at one side of the old apple-tree, but he was terribly impeded by roots, and came very ill speed. Some of these he cut, and digged in below others; for he found, that when they were cut, they impeded his progress nearly as much as before. By the time the villagers rose, John had made a large pit! but then the alarm began, and spread like wild-fire, that the lang weaver was come home again madder than ever, and had been working all night digging a grave in his garden, which every one suspected he meant for Tibby Stott. The pit that he had made, by chance, bore an exact resemblance to a grave, and great was the buzz in the village of Middleholm that morning. The people gathered around him, at first looking cautiously over the garden wall; but at last they came close about him, every man with his staff in his hand, and asked him how he did, and what he was engaged in. John said he had been away down the country, inquiring by what means to improve

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his garden, and he had been instructed to prune the roots of his apple-trees in place of the branches; for that they had run to wood below the earth, which had been the cause of their growing wild and barren. The villagers knew not what to make of this, it was so unlike any thing that the lang weaver had ever done before; so they continued to hang over him, and watch his progress, with all manner of attention. John saw this would never do, for they would discover all; and then there were so many who would be for sharing the money along with him, that a small share might only fall to him; and, moreover, if they told the lord of the manor, he would claim it altogether.

John had a good deal of low cunning; and, as he had now got very deep on one side of the tree, in order to mislead the villagers, he took a wheelbarrow, and hurled a kind of sour dung that had been accumulating around his cow-house for years, with which he crammed the pit that he had made below the tree, and, after covering it over with the mould, he tramped it down. His neighbours then went away and left him, convinced that he had got some new chimera into his head about gardening, which would turn out a piece of folly at the last. John was now left to prosecute his grand research quietly; save that Tibby Stott never ceased entreating him "to mind his loom an' let the trees alane." John answered with great rationality, "sae I will, Tibby, my woman, I will mind the loom; but ye ken a man maun do ae thing afore anither."

Towards the evening, Mr Mathews, the minister, went into the garden to *get a crack wi' John*, and see his new scheme of gardening. John had now got to a considerable depth on the south side of the tree, and, not much regarding the tame moral remarks, or the threadbare puns of his pastor, (these two little amiable characteristics of the Calvinistical divine,) was plying at his task with all his might, for still as he grew more hungry his exertions increased; and just at that precious

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instant, his spade rattled along the surface of a broad stone. "John," said the minister, "What have you got there, John?" 'I fancy I'm come to the solid rock now, sir,' said John, 'I needna' howk na deeper here.' "John, give me the mattock, John," said the minister; "I propine, that it would be nothing inconsistent with prudence and propriety to investigate this matter a little. This garden, as I understand, was planted by four friars of the order of St Benedict, who were the first founders of this village; and these people had sometimes great riches, John. Give me the mattock, John, and if I succeed in raising that stone, I shall claim all that is below it. "I wad maybe contest that point wi' your worship,' said John; 'for I can tell you what you will find below it.' "And pray, what would I find below it, John?" said the Antiburgher minister. 'Just yird an' stane to the centre o' the globe,' said John; 'an' sic a pit wad spoil my bit garden.' "Why, you are grown a wit, John," said the divine, "as well as a gardener. That answer is very good; nevertheless, give me the mattock, John."

The minister might as well have asked John's heart's blood. He determined to keep hold of his spade, and likewise the possession of his pit; yet he did not wish to fight the minister. So, turning his face to him, and keeping his spade behind his back, he said to him, 'Hout na, sir, ye dinna ken how to handle spades an' shools, gin' it be nae maybe the shool o' the word to delve into our hearts and souls wi'.' "There's more strength than propriety in that remark, John," said the minister. 'But I can tell you, sir,' continued John, with a readiness that was not customary with him, 'the hale secret o' the stane. Thae monk bodies were good gardeners, an' they laid aye a braid stane aneath the roots o' ilka fruit-tree that they plantit, to keep the bits o' tendrils frae gripping down to the cauld till, whilk wad soon spoil the tree.' "Why, John, I have heard of such an experiment, indeed; and I suspect,

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you have guessed nearer to the truth than might have been gathered from the tenor of the foregoing chapter of your life, John; it is therefore vain for a man to waste his strength for nought. A good evening to you, John." 'Gude e'en, gude e'en to your Reverence,' said John, as he turned about in his hole, chuckling and laughing with delight; and when the Antiburgher minister was fairly out at the gate, he nodded his head, and said to himself, 'Now, if I hae nae mumpit the minister, my name's no John Gray o' Middleholm. Thae gospel bodies want to hae a finger in ilka ane's pye, but they manna hae things a' their ain gate neither. O there's nae set o' men on the face of the yird as keen o' siller as the ministers! Ane wad think, to hear them preach, that they held the warld quite at the staff's end; but a' the time they're nibblin nibblin at it just like a trout at a worm, or a hare at a kail-stock. He thought to hae my pose! Let him haud him wi' his steepin'—screw'd as it is off the backs an' the meltiths o' mony a poor body."

John took hold of a stone hammer, and gave the broad stone a smash on the one side. As he struck, the stone tottered, and John heard distinctly, something that jingled below it. The very hairs of his head stood upright, he was in such agitation! the hammer dropped from his hand, and he jumped out of the pit, gazed all around him, and then ran towards the house, impelled by some inward feeling to communicate his good fortune to his partner; but by the way reflection whispered in his ear, that Tibby Stott, poor creature! was not the person calculated for keeping such an important secret. This set him back to his pose; which, in trembling anxiety, he resolved to survey; and, cleaning all the earth from above the stone, he heaved it up, and there beheld * * * * * * * *

It must not here be told what John beheld.—It would be too much for the reader's happiness to bear. He must be

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left to conjecture what it was that John discovered below that broad stone, and it is two to one he will guess wrong, for all that he has heard about it, and for as plain as matters have been made to him. John let the stone sink down again —took the wheelbarrow, and filled the pit full of wet straw, which he judged better than dung; then, covering it over with earth, he went into his supper of thin bleared sowins, amid his confused and noisy family, all quarrelling about their portions; and finally, to his bed with Tibby Stott.

That night, John drew nearer to Tibby than usual, and put his arm around her neck. "Wow, John, hinny!" quoth she, "what means a' this kindness the night?" "Tibby Stott, my woman Tibby," said John, "I hae a secret to tell you; but ye're to promise, an' swear to me, that ye're never to let it to the tap o' your tongue, as lang as ye hae life, afore ony body but mysel." Tibby promised all that John desired her, and she repeated as many oaths after him as he chose, eager to learn this great secret; and John, after affecting great hesitation and scruples, addressed her as follows:

"Tibby Stott, do you ken what was the matter wi' me, when I was last sae unweel?" "Na, John, I didna ken then, nor ken I yet." "But I kend, Tibby Stott; and there's no anither in this world kens, or ever maun ken, but yoursel. I was very ill then, Tibby; an' I was in a very queer way. Ay, I was waur than ony body thought! But do you ken how I got better, Tibby?" "Indeed, I dinna ken that nouther, John." "But I'll tell you, Tibby. I was brought to bed o' twa black birds; an' I hae them keepin concealed i' the house; an' they're twa ill spirits, far waur than cockatrices. Now, if this war kend, I wad be hanged, an' ye wad be burnt at the stake for a witch; therefore, keep the secret as you value both our lives. An', Tibby, ye maun never gang to look for thae twa birds, for if ever ye

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find them, they'll flee away wi' you to an ill place; an' mind ye an' dinna gang to be telling this to ony living flesh, Tibby Stott."

"Na, na, John; sin' ye bid me, I sall never tak the tale o'er the tap o' my tongue. But, oh! alak! an wae's me! what's to come o' us! Ye hae gart a' my flesh girrel, John; to think that ever my gudeman sude hae been made a mither! an' then to think what he's mither to! Mither o' twa de'ils! The Lord have a care o' us, John! wad it no be better to let the twa imps flee away, or get Mr Mathews to lair them?"

"But tent me here, Tibby Stott, my woman, Tibby, they're sent for gude luck——"

"It can only be de'il's luck, at the best, John; an' his can never be good luck."

"The best o' a' luck, Tibby; for I can tell you, we'll never want as lang as they are in the house. They'll bring me siller when I like, an' what I like; an' a' that ye hae to do, is to haud your tongue, an' ye'll find the good o't; but if ever ye let this secret escape you, we're ruined hip and thigh for ever."

Tibby promised again for the sake of the money; but the next morning before she swept her house, she ran in unto a neighbouring gossip, and addressed her as follows:

"Wow, Jean, I hae gotten a screed o' unco news sin' I last saw you! I trow ye didna ken that we had a crying i' this town the tither week?"

"I wat, Tibby, I never heard o' sic a thing afore."

"Aye, but atween you an' me, there's a pair o' braw twins come to the warl, though nane o' the best hued anes that may be. But they'll be snug-keepit anes, an' weel-tochered anes, and weel keepit out o' sight, as maiden's bairns should be. Aye, Jean, my dow; but an' ye kend wha's the mither o' them, your een wad stand i' back water wi' laughin!"

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"What? Hout fie, Tibby! I wat weel it isna Bess Bob again, the Antiburgher minister's housekeeper?"

"Waur nor that yet; an' that wad hae been ill eneuch. But ye see the thing maunna be tauld; or else ye maun swear never to tell it again as lang as ye live."

"Me tell it again! Nah! It is weel kend I never tauld a secret i' my life. Ane may safely trust me wi' ony thing. My father, honest man, used to say to me, even when I was but a wee toddlin thing, that he had sae muckle to lippen to me, that he could hae trustit me wi' a housefu' o' untelled millstanes. The thing that's bred i' the bane winna easily ding out o' the flesh. When I was sae trusty then, what should I be now?"

"Aye, to be sure, there's a great deal in that. It says muckle for ane, when ane's pawrent can trust ane, sae as to do as ane likes i' ane's house. My father wad never trust me wi' a boddle; but mony a time he said I wad be a good poor man's wife, for that the best thing ony body could do for a poor man, was to gie him employment, an' I was the ane that wad haud mine busy for the maist part o' the four and twenty hours. But for a' my father's far-seen good sense, I hae had eneuch ado wi' John Gray; for though he's nae bad hand when he's on the loom, it is nae easy matter to keep him at the batt. But that's a' away frae our story. Sin your father could trust you sae far, I think I may trust you too, only ye're to say *as sure as death*, you will never tell it again."

Jane complied, as was most likely, for the sake of this mysterious and scandalous story, as she deemed it to be, and after every precaution on the part of Tibby Stott, her gossip was intrusted with the whole. It would be endless to recount all the promises that were stipulated for, made, and broken at Middleholm, in the course of that day. Suffice it, that before night, every one, both old and young, in the village,

knew that the lang weaver had been *brought to bed o' twa black craws.*

This was too ridiculous a story to be believed, even by the ignorant inhabitants of that ancient village; and, as John shrewdly anticipated, they only laughed at John Gray's crazy wife. It proved however to him, that it would never do to trust his helpmate with the secret of finding hidden poses, and that whatever money he drew from such funds, it behoved him to ascribe it to the generosity of the two black birds.

So John arose one moonlight night, while others slept, went into his garden, and, removing the wet straw, he again lifted up the broad stone, and took from under it the valuable treasure of which he had formely made discovery. This was neither less nor more than the very thing he had always been told of, both by the vision of the cobbler in his dream, and by the cobbler himself; namely, an old pan filled with coins, of a date and reign John knew nothing about. Nearly one-fourth of the whole bulk was made up of broad pieces of gold, but very thin, enclosed in one side of the pan; the rest was all silver, in a considerable state of decay. There were likewise among the gold, four rude square coins, about a quarter of an inch in thickness, and nearly the weight of a dollar each. John emptied them into a bag, and marched straight to Edinburgh with his treasure; where, after a great deal of manœuvring, he sold the whole for the miserable sum of £213 : 12 : 6, being the exact value of the metal (as the man assured him) to a scruple. John got his payment in gold and silver, for he would have nothing to do with bank-notes, and brought the whole home with him. He knew nothing about putting money out at interest; and, still in fear lest he should be discovered, he hid it in the corner of his chest, resolved to live well on it till it was done, and then dig up another tree, take the pose from below it, and sell,

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and spend that in course; and so on: for John knew perfectly well, that he had a dozen of poses more to begin to when the first was done.

Thenceforward, John's meal became somewhat more plentiful, but improved nothing in quality. He had been so long used to a life of poverty, that parsimony was become natural to him, and it was but seldom that he applied to the two birds for assistance. He could not rest however until he digged below one other tree, that he might have some guess what the extent of his treasure was, and what he had to depend on.

He accordingly began, and digged all round the next, and in beneath it, until the pits on each side met below the stem of the tree at a great depth, so that every one of the downward roots were cut; but for all that he could do, he could find no treasure whatever, and was obliged to give up the scrutiny considerably disappointed. Having, however, discovered, in the former adventure, that the removal of a part of the immense quantity of miry sour dung from about his cowhouse had been attended with some conveniences, he likewise filled up this latter pit with a farther portion of that, and again betook himself to his loom and his twa black craws.

The next year, to the astonishment of all, but more particularly to John himself, who had never once calculated on such an event, these two trees, after being literally covered over with healthy blossoms, bore such a load of fruit as never had been witnessed in that country. Almost every branch required a prop to prevent it from being torn from the tree, by the increasing weight. John pulled the apples always as they ripened, and sent a quantity down every week by the carrier to his friend, the cobbler of Kelso, whose wife and daughter, it will be remembered, kept a fruit-shop in one end of his dwelling. At the close of the year, when John went

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down to settle with his old friend and the three-cocked hat, the latter paid him gratefully £7, 10s. for the produce of these two trees, and thanked him for his credit; not forgetting to treat him at breakfast with a cut of broiled salmon and a glass of brandy.

John, perceiving that this was good interest for a few wheelbarrows full of sour mire, followed the same mode with all his apple-trees, and planted more, so that in the course of a few years, the cobbler paid him annually from 30 to 45 pounds Sterling for fruit, a great sum in those days; and thus was the cobbler's extraordinary dream thoroughly fulfilled, not alone with regard to the main pose in the old pan, but that below every tree of the garden.

John now lived comfortably, with his family, all the days of his life, and there were no lasses had such trim and elegant cockernonies in all the Antiburgher meeting-house of Middleholm as the daughters of the lang weaver. But Tibby Stott, poor creature! believed till her dying day, that their wealth was supplied by the twa mysterious black craws, whose place of concealment she never found out, nor ever sought after.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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